

Feb-Mar-Apr 2015



PHOTO NEWS

Marlborough Camera Club Newsletter

www.marlboroughcameraclub.org.nz

Featured in This Issue



Member Profile - Eunice Belk



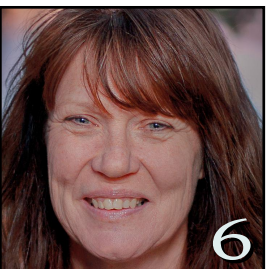
Member Profile - Lynette Bainbridge



Sarnim Dean - Photography - 3 Simple Tips



Roger Thawaites, ASPNZ - Natural History Photography



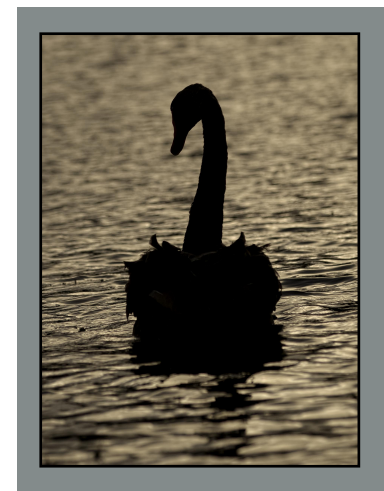
Helen Bauman - Ashburton Lakes Trip



Lyndie Henry - Asia Photo Blog



Front Image: Woebegone



Back Image: Swan Lake

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Emily Burgess: Letter from the Editor

Well, I hope the revived Photo News is a pleasure to read. A lot of work, time and effort has gone into creating it. This could not have been achieved without the help of members contributing with articles. My greatest thanks to all those who contributed for this issue of Photo News.

In order to keep Photo News alive, I will be relying on club members to donate some of their time in contributing. I am sure many of you feel that you don't have anything to contribute. On the contrary, everyone has something they could share. It does not have to be all technical and tutorial based articles. I have Trevor Dennis and Roger Thwaites who have very kindly agreed to do this on a regular basis. Thank you to Sarnim Dean who's also kindly agreed to contribute tutorials from time to time.

Photo News is divided into different sections. There is a 'Member Profile' section where every issue will feature two club members. Every member will be sent an e-mail at one stage or another asking them to contribute to this section. It's a great opportunity for club members to get to know other members and it's a platform to share your thoughts and some of your favorite images. Don't worry about trying to come up with content as I have included questions in the e-mail which can serve as a guide. Again, many thanks to both Eunice Belk and Lynette Bainbridge who were the first to take up the challenge!

The other section of the newsletter is a 'General' section which covers non tutorial based articles.

These can be anything from your experience with certain equipment, a photoblog like Lyndie Henry's article (thank you so much Lyndie - you supplied so many photos, you will have your own Photo Blog section for the whole of 2015!), a recent photography trip write up like Helen Bauman's Asburton Lakes trip or anything you'd like to share.

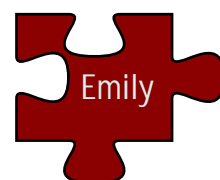
Then there's the tutorial section which is broad ranging. Articles which come under this heading include technical articles and it also includes other types of articles like 'How To' subject matter. This can be anything from how you took that night shot of the Milky Way to how you got the shot of that perfect rugby tackle. You don't have to be an experienced photographer to share how you got that shot. This section can also feature 'Before and After' articles where a member can show a 'Before' image and write up the process of achieving the 'After' image.

So, as you can see, there's plenty of scope for members to contribute and I hope that you do! If you wish to contribute, please send your article to me at webmaster@marlboroughcameracclub.org.nz by clicking directly on the e-mail address. This is a link and it should open your default e-mail programme.

Talking about links, there are several in this newsletter. If the mouse cursor is hovered over

any of the photos in the 'Featured in this Issue' page, a link icon should appear. Click this once and it will take you directly to that page! The other links can be found on the front and back page which are linked to the club's website.

In the mean time, enjoy Photo News and see you in May 2015!





Robyn Carter: President's Page

Welcome to our first Photo News of 2015, and the first for a long time since Trevor retired. Trevor did a fabulous job of the Photo News for many years, and it was much missed. Thanks to Emily who has done a stellar job on organising this, it is much appreciated by all. I've just come back from four weeks away in Europe. The unthinkable happened while away – my Canon 7D died after taking a photograph of the London Shard. I pointed it to the Shard and it did this almighty Clunkity clunk never to go again. I was lucky that a friend had a Canon 1100D that they were not using, which fit my lenses, so I was able to borrow this for a week, using it in the UK, then a week in the Netherlands, then in Wales, where I had to give it back. Back in the Netherlands I bemoaned the lack of a camera to take photos, and after doing a lot of research, decided to purchase one at the local Camera Store in Utrecht so not to be camera-less. It worked out cheaper as I got the VAT refunded to me at the airport on my departure.

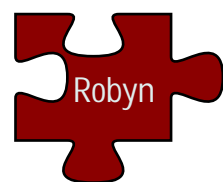
On my arrival back in New Zealand, I declared the camera, but they were not interested and waved me through the Green lane. So I didn't even have to pay GST. Very relieved. So I'm busy learning how to use the 7D Mark II, which is quite a different beast in many ways to the 7D. I was so confused the first few hours of shooting with it, I even forgot to set the image quality to RAW. The most confusing thing I'm trying to get my head around are the focal points, but the best thing I've found is that the Back Button Focus is set up automatically, rather than having to try and set it up myself.

The downside of buying in Europe was that I received 4 manuals – in German, Dutch, French, and Italian. No English. So I couldn't familiarise myself with the camera on the plane home by reading the manual! I'm still trying to figure out how to save the manual to my HDD from the internet – so far it only lets me save it one page at a time, or print the whole thing, (584 pages).

But I will get there. Buying new cameras or upgrading, always takes a little bit of adjusting. I started with my film camera – the Canon EOS 500, then went digital with the Canon Powershot Pro 1. After using that for 9 months, I upgraded to the Canon 20D. For many months I took both cameras out because I mistakenly thought that the Powershot was better than the Canon 20D in some things. After a while I realised I was wrong – it was just habit and what I was used to. The same thing happened when I upgraded to the 7D from the 20D. I bemoaned the loss of my 20D for many months. And of course I knew my 7D inside out after 5 years of use, and my new one isn't set up the same yet, so right now, I'm still grieving for my 7D. Despite the fact that I now have a piece of equipment that is superior to my 7D. I'm sure I'll come round eventually.

One highlight of being in the Netherlands for me was visiting the Photography Museum (F.O.A.M) in Amsterdam. The Exhibition 'Finding Vivian Meyer' had just opened. I had a museum card so got free entry, but there was a bit of a wait as I went to it on a Saturday, and it was raining so obviously a good rainy day outing for most people. Anyway – the exhibition was superb. Vivian Meyer took photos of her life around New York and Chicago for years, while working as a Nanny. No one realised she was doing this or the extent of her collection, until she died a few years ago. The result was an amazing collection of historical records of life in Chicago and New York. The Images were compelling, inspirational and emotional. If the exhibition ever gets to Te Papa, or Auckland Art Gallery, I recommend you make the time to see it, especially if you're interested in Street Photography. I have two images of hers still burnt into my mind that I can't stop thinking about, even after a month.

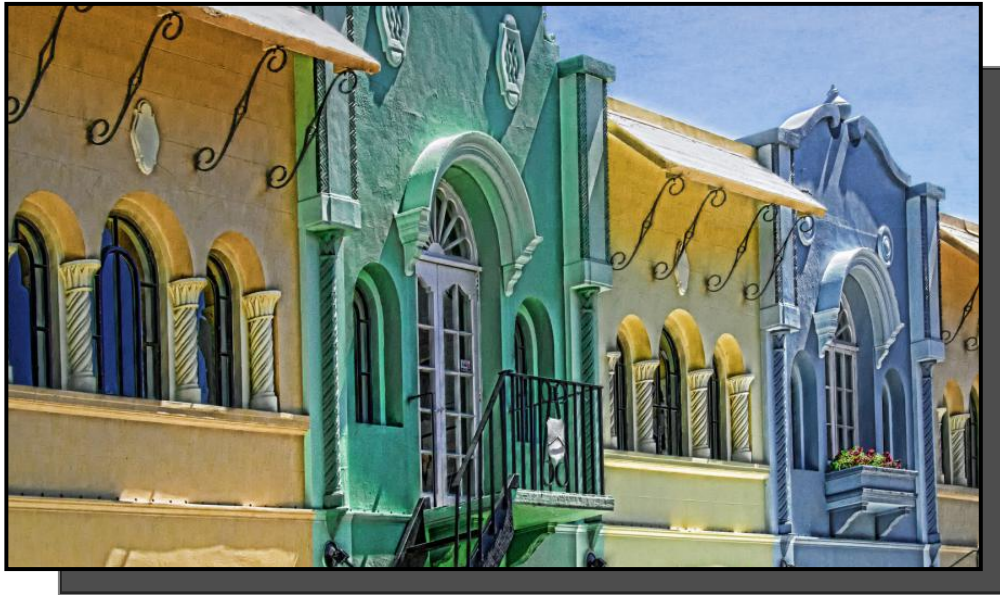
Anyway - here's to a Happy New year, and lots of great photographic opportunities for 2015.



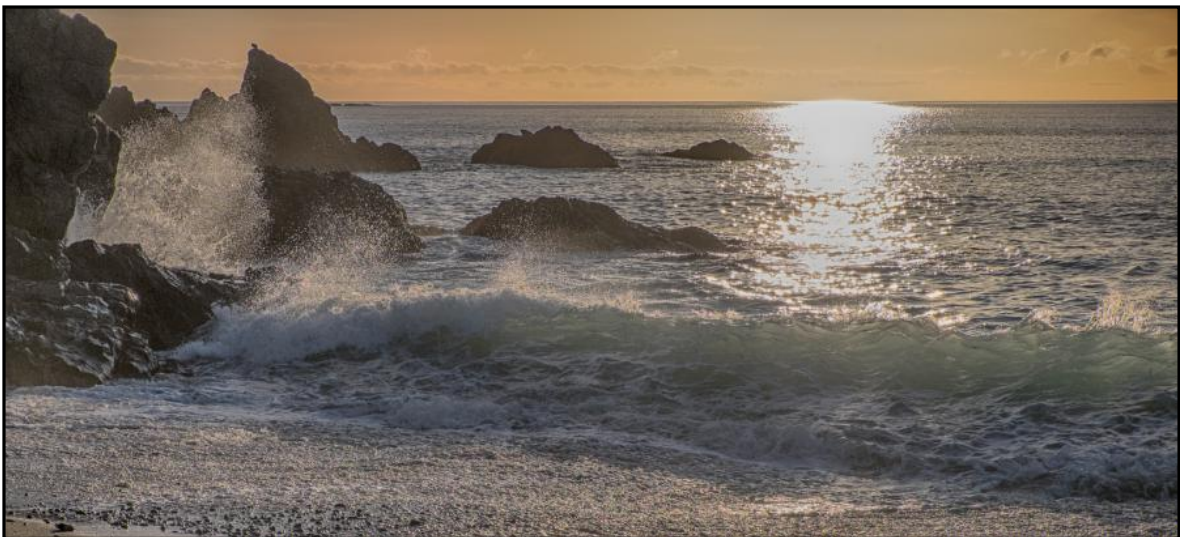


Member Profile: Eunice Belk

I joined the Marlborough Camera Club about two and a half years ago after encouragement from Liz Davidson who was a fellow member of the Senior Net camera group which was formed as a follow up to their Picasa Class. I was new to photography and used a Canon Powershot basic compact camera which produced quite pleasing images I thought. I followed up with a group run by Roger Thwaites an introduction to DSLR cameras and although a lot of it went over my head considering I knew nothing about them.



I took some of the information on board and when I bought my Nikon D3200 a few months later I was able to apply some of what I learned. Recently I changed direction, sold the Nikon and purchased a Fuji XT1 mirrorless camera, 18-135 lens and macro lens. To date Fuji haven't released many X-mount lenses but apparently more are to come in 2015. I am enjoying this camera and still getting to know it, so much to learn and so many features. I'm still trying to decide which genre of photography most suits my lifestyle and interests. I've dabbled in a bit of everything but not so much portraiture for various reasons, mainly lack of subjects and confidence, perhaps next year I will attempt portraits.





Member Profile: Eunice Belk

My inspiration comes mainly from the camera club meetings, I'm in awe of the clever and beautiful images that are shown each month. I never imagined I could present such photographs and was hugely encouraged with a recent second place in round 5 of Canon On Line – now the pressure is on to repeat!! Creativity doesn't come easily to me.

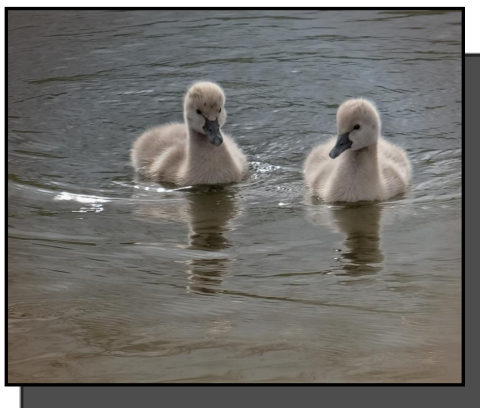
The camera club members are so generous with their help and encouragement. Robyn Carter's C groups were invaluable and thanks to Owen Dunne I got started with Lightroom and shooting in Raw. Now the aim is to get out of C Grade and into B Grade, but those honours seem to have been few and far between in 2014. I enjoy entering competitions, it gives me a reason to take photographs and winning is not the aim of entering.



Poppy Bud - 2nd Place Canon On Line



Competition is always a learning experience, it makes one strive to do better. I love pouring over the winning entries and looking at where I could have done better, I guess that's what competitions are all about for me anyway.



I am so lucky to have the time, a supportive husband and beautiful Marlborough in which to pursue this fascinating hobby I am so enjoying in my retirement years. Such a pity I didn't find photography years ago.





Member Profile: Lynette Bainbridge

My name is Lynette and I have been a member of the camera club since 2004. I have always had a keen interest in the arts and have come from a family that have had a lot of very interesting talented artistic people. From a great great grandfather; a photographer in Auckland when Queen Street was a dirt road - who travelled up and down the top of the north taking photos of settlers, an aunt who coloured portraits in a photography studio, several talented cabinet makers, wood carvers, some artists including an ancestor who had a painting hung in the louvre and also my very talented mother who was a creative person with many many artistic skills.

I would have loved to have studied art when I was young, I was always very creative even though I often feel my talents are very amateurish. Art wasn't an option at school and definitely not considered a career option. However I did the next best thing when I left school and took up tracing for Engineers, Architects until I stopped work to have a family.



Together with my grandchildren



I took this photo when I first joined the club. I had not had a camera for long and it got 2nd place in Shot of the Year.

When I was small I loved looking at all my grandparents old family photos and also spent some time at a family friends photography studio; there was something about visiting his studio - I loved the smells of the chemicals and looking at all his wonderful photographs. In my teens I had a small instamatic and sometimes borrowed my mother's old box brownie to take photos. When I was eighteen I took a photo of my young baby brother and entered it into the Auckland's National Baby competition, it was voted the best photo in the competition, I remember feeling really stoked as it was taken on an instamatic. Though I loved taking photos I had no idea of composition, light, lenses etc. and only knew what I had seen as a child, but never thought it was within my reach, abilities or my budget.



Member Profile: Lynnette Bainbridge

When I married my husband Tom, the studio photographer who we knew from my childhood took our wedding photos on proviso that he could use our photos as an example of garden weddings; which were not that common. He didn't tell us, but entered one of the photos into a major Photographic competition - it won best overall. What a surprise we got when we came face to face with a huge full wall print of ourselves; displayed in shore city when we went shopping. Mr Morris (photographer) definitely added to my interest in photography. Though I did not however do anything about it until my children got older and we moved to Blenheim.

With the digital age of photography I decided to invest in a small fixed lens camera. Don Kelly knowing I was interested in photography, suggested I attended a meeting at the club as they were having a talk on digital photography. The club were not sure if they were going to allow digital photographs into their competitions, but had put on an evening about the growing interest in digital. The digital era has moved so quickly that in such a short time the club has gone from majority using film and slides to now the club is probably 90% digital.



NZ Falcon - Never used in competition, but I was so amazed when I came across one when out walking.



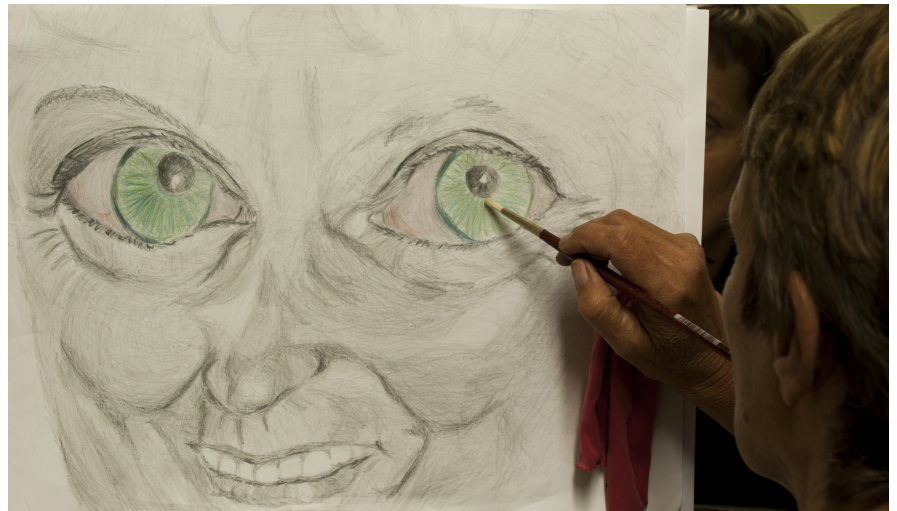
Saddleback - Won the Natural History Trophy and also got an Acceptance in Natex (the only time I've entered).

With working full time and being a person that has lots of interests, with a tendency for being distracted easily - I don't always put a lot of time into my photography; and would not consider myself a serious photographer. I do tend to take photos of things that jump out at me, often on the spur of the moment. I also approach our club competitions in the same way, if a subject interests me I will take a photo to enter the subject. I have learnt a lot from the club and though I still use kit lenses on a canon 450D; which now has limited capabilities compared to more modern cameras, I still have fun with my photos and can sometimes come up with a nice image.



Member Profile: Lynnette Bainbridge

My biggest obstacle with my photography and many other facets in my life is myself. I often feel that my artwork/images are not good enough and even though I think I may have a good image; often don't think it's worthy of entering into a club competition. In the last year; due to dabbling in different art mediums - I have gained a bit more confidence and actually entered some of those images and have surprised myself with how well they have done. I have really discovered that it's not what others think of an image, it's about what I think that matters. Due to that they seem to be more honest images that are true to myself.



Self Portrait

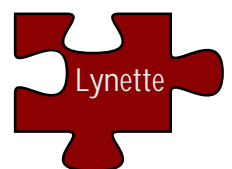


Gannet Colony - Received Honours in a club competition

My next challenge is learning the digital darkroom side of photography - (it's a big challenge) but not necessarily a must. Up until now I have relied on cropping, sharpening and very minor adjustments to my images apart from maybe one or two images - where I have badgered my poor husband to quickly tell me how to do something. One image was a gannet, but after completing the adjustments and not using Photoshop often; by the time I try to do something the next time I have forgotten how to do it. I don't like asking Tom as after working with these programs all day at work - I feel he does not need or want to use his relax

time on helping me; plus I do need to learn myself to fully realise what I want to accomplish. I recently had some tuition from Owen and that has now given me a taste of what can be done so am now ready to put more time into learning.

For any of our new members my accomplishment on getting to 'A Grade' was a great feeling. I feel I succeeded by having fun with the camera, staying true to myself and having confidence and belief in my images. That's what's helped me - not the fancy gear, programs and the bells and whistles. Have fun!!!





Sarnim Dean: Photography - 3 Simple Tips

Want to make your images stand out? Below are some ideas which I hope will help.

There are many ingredients that make a successful image but, first up, the image should have a clear intent. We've all seen photos that are a little boring, and often this is due to the photographer not being clear about the purpose of the photo. Let's look at this unusual image:



The intent is to display the shape and texture of a toddler's eyelash. Not to mention how disproportionately long they are! Beyond that, the intention is to document details of a rapidly developing little person.

So, tip 1 is - 'Ensure your image has a clear intent'.

Tip 2 - Try to keep your photograph simple. In this image of traditional Cook Island dancers, the perfectly coordinated movements caught my attention. However I didn't want a background of plastic chairs and tables.

All it took was for me to reposition myself to ensure a minimalist background. This allows the viewer to completely focus on my photograph's intent - the poise, colours and movement of the dancers.

Tip 2 is - 'Keep your image simple'.



Finally, keep an eye out for beautiful lighting. This is usually at the beginning and end of each day, which photographers often label 'The Golden Hour'. Of course, this often comes at the sacrifice of having to drag yourself out of bed early! But the rewards are worth it. In this image of the Awaterre Valley, the early morning light makes for a much nicer image than if the valley had been photographed in the middle of the day. So, the final tip is - 'Consider photographing in the early morning or evening light'.

There are many other components that make for good photography but I'd mention one other point - you don't need a flash camera. Using the camera in a smartphone in conjunction with the above tips will see an increase in photos you're proud to show your friends.





Roger Thwaites, APSNZ: Natural History Photography

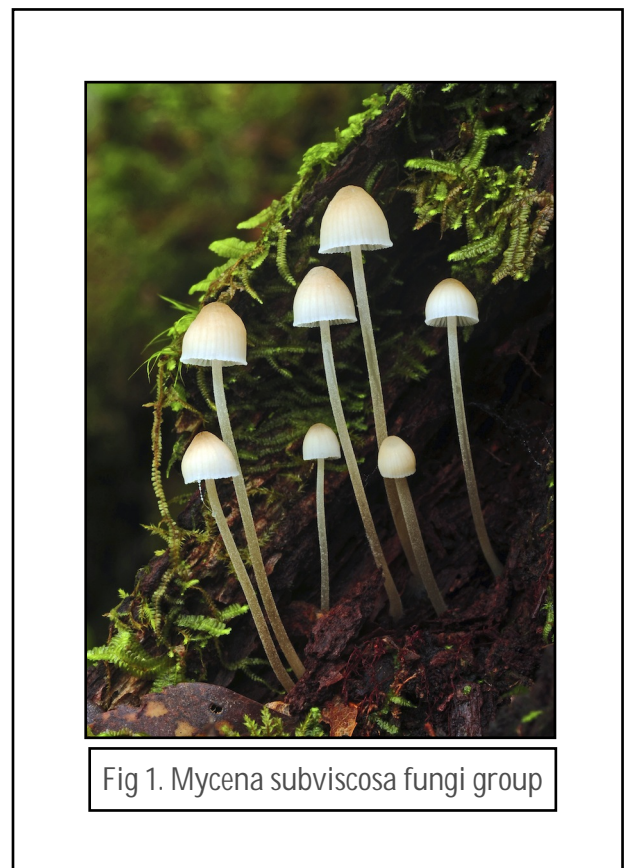
Photographers can become interested in Natural History (NH) photography, quite by accident, or as a natural extension of their interest in another subject, for example: Landscape/Seascape, or Macro/Close-up work. Others, may be inspired by the strikingly beautiful photographs of nature produced by established NH photographers, and decide to try it for themselves.

To start with, we need to understand the meaning of Natural History photography, and what it embraces. A very good explanation of it, can be found by reading the Photographic Society of NZ (PSNZ) Natural History competition rules. In short though, Natural History Photography involves the faithful and truthful recording of Fauna (wildlife) and Flora (plants, shrubs, and trees), in their natural habitat. 'Geological' and 'climatic' subjects are also covered by the NH category. An important factor, is the researching and naming of the NH subjects, and using the 'Common' or 'Scientific' titles or names, to describe the species. Natural History, is the 'scientific branch' of the 'broader' subject of Nature, and is more precise in it's approach, and application.

There are so many different branches (subjects) of 'Natural History' to photograph, and I guess the first requisite, is to develop an interest in photographing one or more of these subjects. For myself, that interest has centred around the 'miniature world' of NH Flora and Fauna, and I have been drawn to taking close-up/macro photos of things like Fungi, orchids, alpine flowers, insect species, seashells, and native snails. Each of these, can be a huge challenge in their own right, and it all begins with researching the species to find out where they live (habitat), and to find out which season would be best to go looking for them. Research is an important tool, as it can take alot of the legwork out of looking for the various NH species.

A good keen eye is needed to spot the different species in the wild, and some photographers are naturally blessed with this ability, while for others, the ability to see the different species takes time and patience to tune into and develop.

"Anticipation" is another good trait to have, especially when birds are about to take flight, plants are waving around in the breeze, and insects are wanting to run off and hide! Being able to sense what is about to happen, before it actually happens, is a good attribute to have, as it can be the difference between getting the shot, or losing it altogether.





Roger Thwaites, APSNZ: Natural History Photography

Not only is the capturing of the shot paramount, but also, the capturing of it in such a way, that it presents a clear, sharp, and interesting, image of the NH subject in it's natural environment. Developing a good technique is essential, but so too, is having the right lens(es) available to do the job. I use a combination of up to three different lenses for macro/close-up work: a fixed 105mm, f2.6 Macro lens; a x2 Converter (doubler) lens; and a Macro 28mm-105mm, f3.5-f4.5 zoom lens. The x2 Converter lens fits between the macro lens and the camera, and is used when there is a need to photograph the really small "critters".

There are other cheaper options available for close-up work: A set of three "close-up" diopter filters that can be fitted to the front of 'regular' lenses, (either one at a time, or in combination with each other). Fitting an "Extension Tube" between the camera and the lens, is another option. These come in x1, 2, and 3, and can usually be purchased singularly, or as a set. Another option is to fit a "Reversing Ring" to the camera, and reverse the 'regular' lens, so that it screws into the reversing ring via the lens filter thread. With this method, you lose control over any of the lens mechanics/electronics, but you can achieve a good result using the camera's "manual" mode for the settings. This method relies solely on the 'lens-to-subject' distance to achieve sharp focus of the subject, and although it is a little bit tricky to set up, the results can be stunning. Because of the different lens filter sizes, you may not find this option to be all that practical in these modern times!

The important thing about photographing the more 'static' Natural History subjects, is to allow plenty of time to set up the shot. "Patience" is everything!....don't rush it! Remember the basics: Go for good composition of the subject, and use pin-sharp focussing techniques. If you can get the subject looking good within the frame, (less any distracting or unwanted influences), then in all likelihood, you will have a great looking image. Think: "background"!....This can make your shot a winner, or, absolutely destroy it! Be aware of what is in the background, at all times. In fact, you need to be very aware of the smallest details when you are working with close-up macro....a hair or a piece of dust can be the ruination of your image(a very fine brush, or a blower can be a really handy item to have with you, to get rid of offending unwanted debris). I find the camera viewfinder best for composition purposes, rather than using the 'live view' monitor.....I can see everything in a more finite way! If your camera doesn't have a viewfinder, then you will be stuck with 'live-view'.



Fig 2: Brown Plume Moth (*Platyptilia falcatalis*)

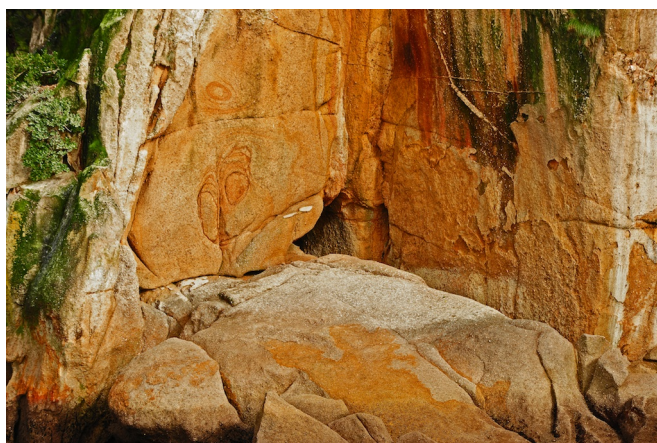


Fig 3: Sandstone Shapes, Patterns and Textures
(Geological features)



The next most important consideration, is lighting. For close-up work, I like a “flat- light”(light overcast day), in conjunction with the use of a reflector. Mine consists of a piece of light card about 150mm x 250mm , with silver cooking foil all over it....works great! Light from a flash, is fairly harsh, and needs to be subdued by a diffuser of some kind, to be useful. Using a flash without a diffuser, can produce unwanted contrasts and shadows and “bleach” out much of the finer detail of the subject. Softer lighting is useful for emphasising the more subtle definition of the shapes, patterns, and textures of your subject. A “ring” flash can be a good option for ‘even lighting’ of close-up subjects, also.

You will see a few images dotted around this article, and the following is a brief explanation which will hopefully, give you some insight and an idea or two, on how to achieve similar results with your own images.

Fig. 1 - *Mycena subviscosa* fungi group: These fungi are physically very small and very delicate (especially the subtle colours of the caps), and are buried away in the forest litter and undergrowth. Only lighting used, was the reflector. The shutter speed was 8-10seconds, so a tripod essential which was splayed out to ground level. Lens: Fixed 105mm macro set @f32. Camera tilted up slightly to display some of the gill features. Most important considerations: The grouping of the fungi; the delicate colours of the caps. Note how the background is nicely compatible with the fungi. Camera exposure mode: Aperture priority.

Fig. 2 - “Brown Plume Moth (*Platyptilia falcatalis*)”: Definition is slightly soft. A difficult critter to photograph. Had to get in really close to the subject using 105mm macro with x2 converter lens attached.....makes focussing a bit of a mission! The moth was a bit nervous, and flinched alot, and being quite hairy all over, added to the softness. The important thing with insects, is to try to depict all of their parts as pin-sharp as you can get it. (Lucky to get the wing plumage in the fully extended state....they don't normally pose like this for long!....normally seen as a stick-like “tee” shape).

Fig. 3 - “Sandstone Shapes, Patterns and Textures” (Geological features): A coastal shot taken from a boat, hand-held. Fine detail and good colour needed for this to work, with the small cave being the main focal point....the eye pivots all around this, noting all the different shapes and patterns of the terrain, along the way. Light overcast conditions overhead, has softened the contrasting shadows, and lifted the intricate detail of the rock forms. 70-210mm zoom lens used, set at 180mm, f11. Important with a shot like this to single out a composition that strongly points to the geological features rather than taking a wider view, and possibly turning it into a landscape image. Although, this could also be considered as a landscape!



Fig 4: Dried Arrangement (Still Life)



Fig. 4 - “Dried Arrangement” (Still Life): Not NH, but threw this in to illustrate how important simple backgrounds are, and the importance of complimentary colours - blue against gentle yellow - very compatible colourings.

Fig. 5 - “Crown fern (Blechnum discolour)”: The important thing with this one is the balance of the composition of the fronds, with the fanning of them from the base to the top, giving a natural radiating flow. Sharp detail and good colour are essential also. A good dollop of patience needed to catch a really still moment, between the ever-present gusts of wind!



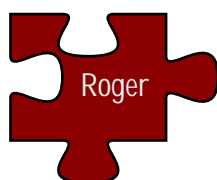
Fig 5: Crown fern (Blechnum discolour)



Fig 6: Violet Pouch Fungus

Fig. 6 - “Violet Pouch Fungus”: It’s not often that you see this species standing erect like this. It is a favourite food of all sorts of insects, and normally is seen right at ground level with lots of holes and bite marks. The shank at the bottom has a twist in it, which makes it look a little unusual. I was a bit lazy with this shot, and decided to attach the x2 converter to the 105mm macro, with tripod, to avoid lying on the forest floor to get the shot. (remote shutter buttons are very handy!). Lighting was provided by a medium-size circular reflector, from a distance of about 6 feet away, with the camera parked at the same distance from the subject. Foreground is slightly messy, but it is all part of the environment where this species is normally found. For this shot, it is the subtle purple colours and the sharp detail of them, which are essential.

FOOTNOTE: I find that “Manual Focus” is most useful for all my close-up work.





Helen Bauman: Ashburton Lakes Trip

Early on the Friday morning Robyn and myself set off on a photography adventure that turned out to be better than we ever expected - Robyn is part of a Facebook group of Bird Photographers and came across Steve Attwoods post inviting other like minded ones to his family bach at Lake Clearwater for the weekend - we both leapt at such an opportunity! We travelled in convoy from Christchurch to the bach and the fun began as soon as we arrived. There were too many of us to fit into Steve's bach so he was borrowing one of the neighbours ones and his instructions were a bit vague so much so that after finding the key we could not find a bach that we could unlock. We must have looked highly suspicious - Steve was like the Pied Piper with us ladies in tow trying out all the baches, in fact I think they were tried more than once.



Lake Clearwater with Mount Potts

Obviously the key was not going to open any of them so Steve had a rethink about his instructions and decided to see if they would fit his neighbours bach who had arranged it all - and hey presto it opened and there on the bench were the keys to open up the borrowed one - phew! Steve had arranged all the food for the whole weekend and it turned out that he is a wonderful cook - we had 3 days of gourmet delight. After our first meal we did the introduction thing - there were ones from all over NZ; Hamilton, Wellington, Blenheim, Christchurch, Dunedin and Gore and thats not the only discovery I made - these guys are almost semi-professional bird photographers I felt way out of my league so that when my turn came to introduce myself I said my motivation for being there was different from theirs as I was collecting photographs to use for material for painting - I mean these guys had lenses worth \$18,000 - my 'big' camera easily fitted inside their lens hood with room to spare!



Helen Bauman: Ashburton Lakes Trip

I learnt so much from them all, from insects that come out only at night time to visiting a Lord of the Rings site. Steve was a wealth of information on the local geographic features and the wildlife - I met Grebe, Doterell and Wrybill for the very first time. On the Saturday morning we got up early and the light was beautiful for taking photos, we walked up the road to Lake Camp to capture the first light on the mountains reflected in the lake then down to Lake Clearwater and found much to photograph along the track around the lake.



Lake Clearwater with Mt Potts and in the far distance Two Thumb Range

After breakfast we did our own thing; all the others went bird hunting while I climbed up Mt Guy a 1322m mountain on the other side of Lake Clearwater, the views from the top were spectacular - a panoramic view from the road encompassing Lakes Emma, Camp and Clearwater to Mt Potts and the Rangitata River beyond with the Two Thumb Range in the background.



View from Mt Guy of Lake Camp, Lake Clearwater and Rangitata River



Helen Bauman: Ashburton Lakes Trip

After lunch we hopped in the vehicles to do a trip to Mt Sunday which is one of the Lord of the Rings locations - it is similar in size to Mt Iron at Wanaka - and is right on the edge of the mighty Rangitata River. On the way we stopped at the top of the saddle with amazing views across to the other side of Rangitata River with the Two Thumb Range behind it and Erewhon Station to the right, and in the far distance was Mt D'Archiac at 2865m which is at the northern border of the Mt Cook National Park. Directly in front of us was Mt Potts a double peaked mountain of 2194m with huge river gorge coming out of the mountains inbetween us and the mountain. It was simply spectacular scenery and hard to tear oneself away from.



View from Mt Guy of Lake Emma, Lake Camp and Lake Clearwater.

At the Mt Sunday carpark we realised we were not all that far from civilisation as there were a number of cars with their occupants spread up and down what has become a popular tourist site. It was a short easy walk to the summit and the massive mountains were so very close, Mt D'Archiac was easily seen and appeared massive and beautiful and covered in snow; apparently anyone wanting to conquer its heights does so from the other side and that I could understand as what I was looking would be foolhardy to attempt any climbing - we left earlier than planned as a dark stormy front was fast approaching and by the time we got back to camp the weather had closed in completely - we were excitedly anticipating awaking to snow on Sunday morning but were sadly disappointed to find it only as a light dusting on the tops in the morning. But what was exciting was a visit from Shannen, my daughter, who lives about 3/4 an hour away, she works and lives on a dairy farm inbetween Methven and Ashburton, as she was leaving she left us with some of her delicious home baking - a very nice date slice and a carrot cake - yum!



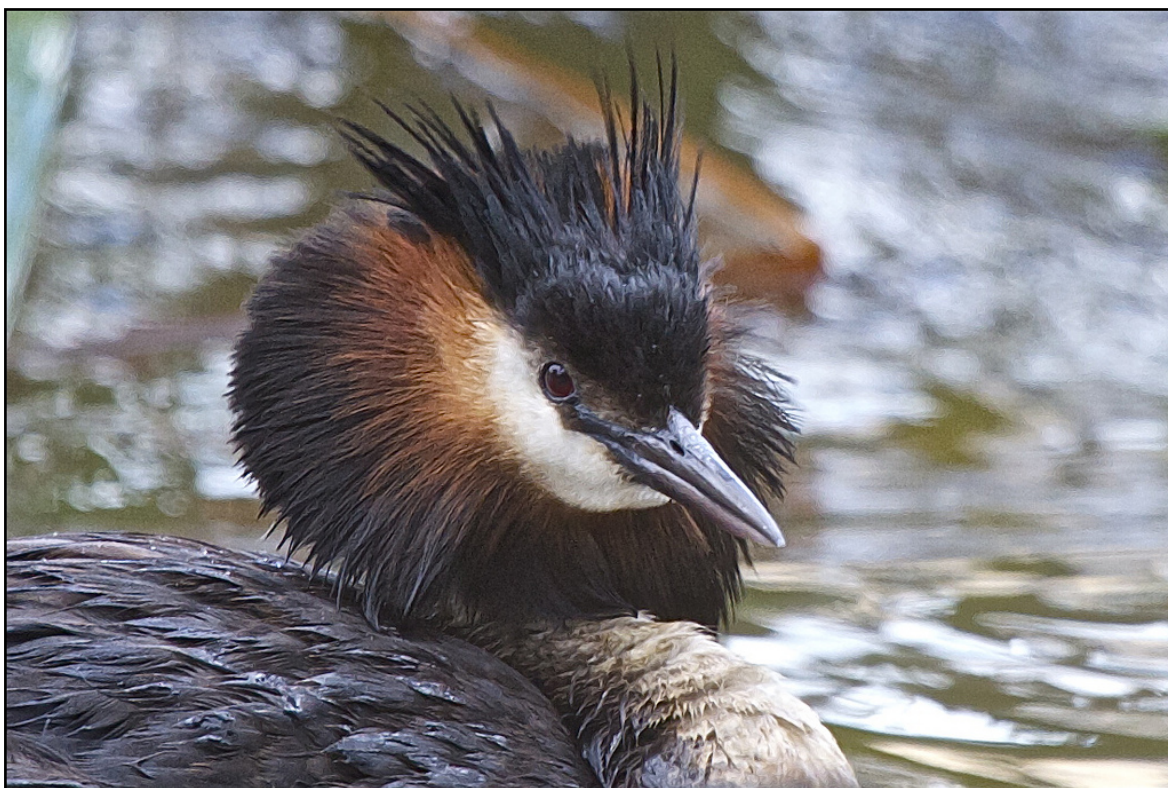
Alpine Plant on Mt Guy



Helen Bauman: Ashburton Lakes Trip

When we awoke on the Sunday it was apparent we did not need to leap out of bed grabbing our camera gear for it was a bit of a gloomy cold day but we did want to get going as a side trip to Lake Heron was planned. After eating, cleaning and packing we set off and our first stop was at the north branch of the Ashburton River, a braided river - I had a personally guided tour and sighting of a Banded Dotterell who obligingly hopped off her nest to show off 3 perfect eggs, as it was a very cold day we soon moved on so she could keep her eggs warm. What we really were looking for was a Wrybill, it is the only bird with a curved beak thought to be for scooping up its food from around stones in riverbeds.

Craig suddenly halted me and pointed down stream and there was a Wrybill coming towards us wading upstream totally unconcerned about our presence, we were able to watch it for quite some time, what a delightful bird and we were only a few metres away from it, I could have stayed all day watching but the others had gone ahead to Lake Heron and we still had some distance to walk to get back to the car. Once we met up with the others I had another first - a grebe - it is bigger than a duck and seems to sit quite low in the water and the feathers around its head stick out in all directions giving it a very comical look. After lunch Robyn and me set off for the journey home, our only stop was to Woolshed Creek near Mt Somers and a quick coffee with two of the Christchurch women before heading home.



Crested Grebe by Steve Attwood





Lyndie Henry: Asia Photo Blog My journey through Asia - Part 1

This is a photo blog about my travels through Asia. Part one will be on Vietnam. It was a backpacking holiday which was truly an experience for me! Firstly I was getting in a pickle at home with the EMPTY backpack trying to get to grips with all the buckles, zips and compartments ... then realised it was upside down! Excellent start!

Vietnam has a population of 90 million people and 34 million motor bikes with a death toll of 30 deaths a day on bikes.



This is a photo showing enormous number of mopeds. We sat in a coach in the comfort zone thinking that we were glad we were not on one of the mopeds with seemingly no road rules. The moped drivers overtake, undertake and drive on the wrong side of the road!

Junctions are free for all, if you see a gap, you go for it. Very scary to watch and then we end up with a 20 minute transfer in the rain and dark sitting on the back of two of them in all the above circumstances!

Scooters are the main mode of transport in Vietnam and are highly versatile. They are used to carry anything and everything.



That's one loaded moped.



That's how you transport chickens!



Mopeds Galore



This is traffic!



Family Vehicle



And this is no better



Child Seat



High Heels



Typical modern bedroom



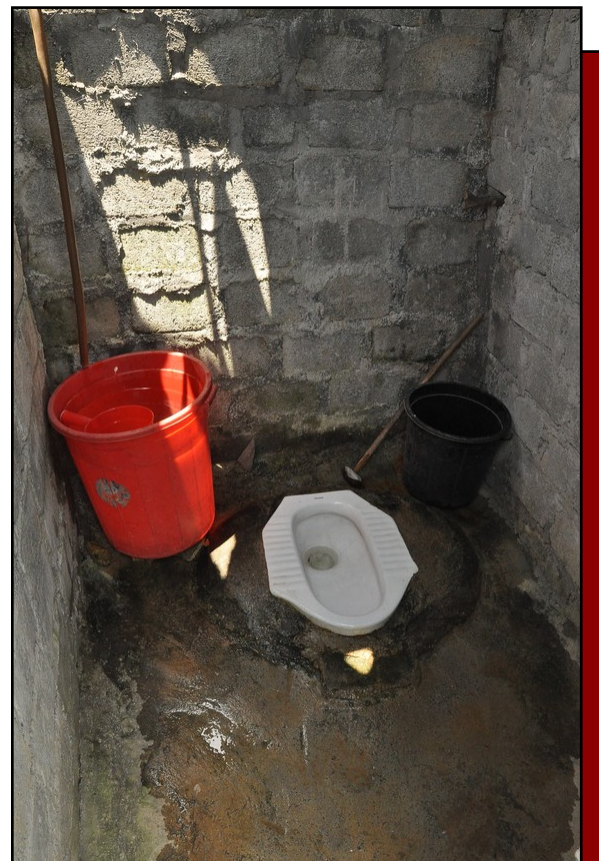
Modern toilet



Dormitory room with mosquito netting



Modern loo in a village house



Traditional squat toilet



November Digital Image of the Month - Stephen Hayward - Burning Bulb



November Print of the Month - Chris Cookson - Damsel in Repose



Robyn Carter - Three Billy Goats Fluff



Print - Abandoned Jetty -
Eunice Belk



Eunice Belk - Black Swan



Tanya Houghton - Bathtime

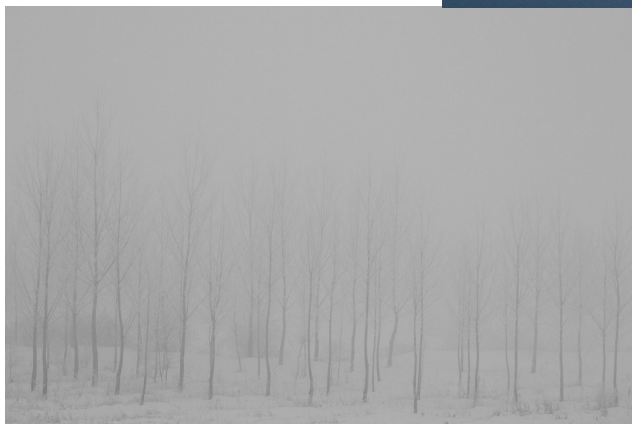
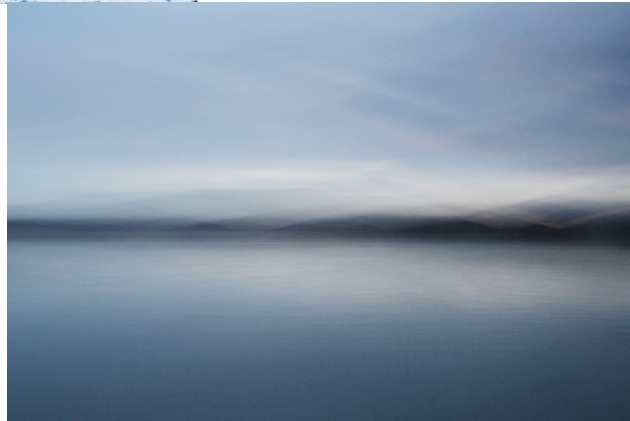
2014 Bowron Interclub Competition - 3rd Place

Emily Burgess
Apres le Deluge



Chris Cookson
Blizzard

Will Parsons
Artwork by Nature



Lucian Nestor
Winter

2014 Seddon Shield - Matthewson Tropy - 1st Place



Shopping Up A Storm - Lynette Bainbridge



Carolyn Hope - Damselfly



Chris Steadman - Lemon Splash



Chris Cookson - Blizzard

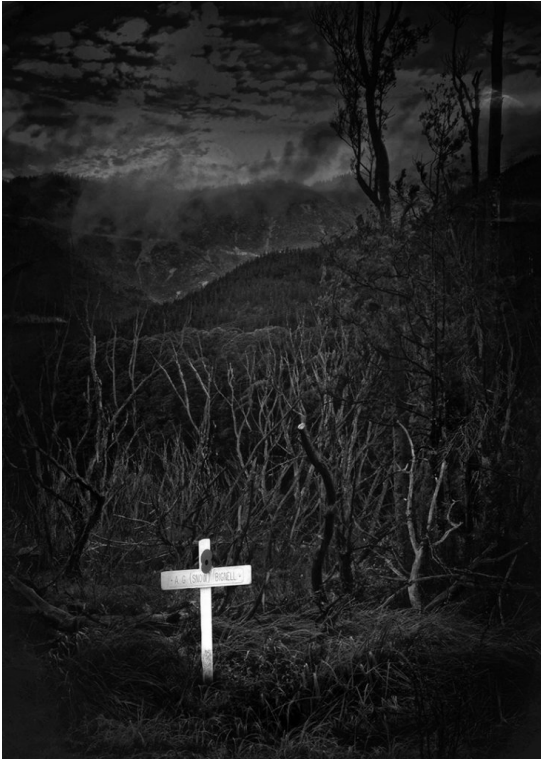


Owen Dunne - My World



Denise Manning - Walkies

Monochrome Prints of the Year



Overall Shot of the Year and
Monochrome Print of the Year
1st Place: Denise Manning
RIP



2nd Place: Will Parsons
Grace



3rd Place: Iain Galloway
Foggy Ida Valley

Colour Prints of the Year

1st Place: Carolyn Hope
Sun Orchard



2nd Place: Robyn Carter
Walnut Tree

3rd Place: Owen Dunne
Sentinel, Wharakiki Beach



Digital Image of the Year



1st Place: Stephen Hayward
Burn Out

2nd Place: Robyn Carter
Venetian Canal



3rd Place: Lyndie Henry
Little Boy





The End

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