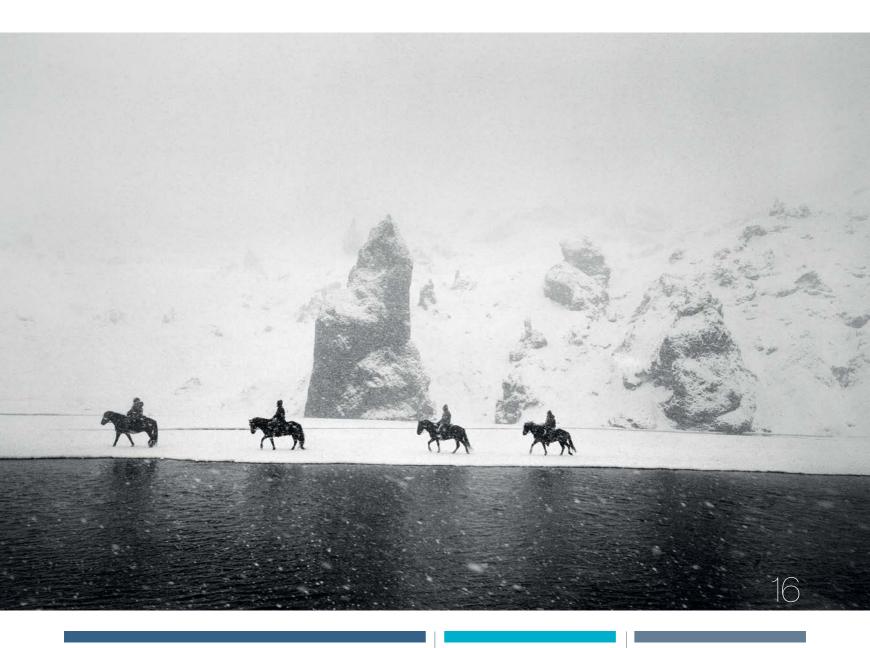
OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR - THE WINNERS!







APRIL 2017



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IN THE MAGAZINE THIS MONTH...



Daniel Bridge can usually be found in the woodlands and nature reserves of Essex, where he'll be running workshops, giving private tuition, or just nose-deep in moss, looking though a macro lens danielbridge.co.uk



Nick Smith is a writer and photographer specialising in travel and environmental issues. He is a contributing editor on the Explorers Journal and is a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. nicksmithphoto.com



Pete Bridgwood is a fine art landscape photographer and writer. He is fascinated by the creative foundations of landscape photography and passionate about exploring the emotional elements of the art. petebridgwood.com



Richard Garvey-Williams is an award-winning wildlife and landscape photographer and author. Having spent his childhood in Africa, he relishes opportunities to return and share the experience by leading photographic safaris. Now based in Devon, he also offers tutoring on Dartmoor. richardgarveywilliams.com



Drew Buckley is an award-winning professional landscape and wildlife photographer from Pembrokeshire. His images are internationally published in many magazines, books, and in the media. He also runs location-based photographic workshops around Wales.

drewbuckleyphotography.com



Based in the Scottish Highlands, Peter Cairns is a conservation photographer with 17 years experience Co-founder of several major projects, such as Tooth & Claw, Wild Wonders of Europe and 2020VISION. Peter is now working on a long-term project titled Scotland: The Big Picture.

wildmedia.org



Paul Harris trained as a photojournalist. He is passionate about storytelling through his travel, adventure and documentary imagery; balancing the road less travelled with the spirit of the land and its peoples. Paul is a sought-after tutor, and leads photo tours for Wild Photography Holidays. paulharrisphotography.com



Paul Holloway works part time as a teacher, and lives in the village of Callander at the gateway to the Scottish Highlands. He spends as much time as he can out photographing, and being a keen hillwalker he enjoys combining both pursuits. paulhollowayphotography.



Jake Turner is a landscape photographer from Swindon. He spends most of his free time photographing the lesser-known landscapes close to his home, but likes to balance it out with plenty of travelling. jrturnerphotography.co.uk



Christopher Swan is an award-winning landscape photographer from Glasgow. He is happiest wandering around the Highlands and islands of Scotland with a camera in hand. christopherswan.co.uk



James Warwick's work is published regularly worldwide. For nearly 10 years he specialised in photographing Kenyan wildlife. Since returning to Ashdown Forest in Sussex a few years ago he has mainly concentrated on British subjects, as well as continuing to work abroad in locations such as India and the Seychelles. jameswarwick.co.uk



At the age of five, Fergus Kennedy loved messing around in the sea and playing with gadgets. Forty years on, very little has changed. He is a marine biologist and works as a freelance photographer, drone pilot and camera operator for clients such as the BBC and Canon Europe. ferguskennedy.com

OutdoorPhotography

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The prize winners...

The latest Outdoor Photographer of the Year competition has shown us once again just how deep the pool is of immensely talented photographers around the globe. We not only had a record number of entries, but the quality bar was pushed upwards too, which led to a heart-achingly difficult shortlisting and final judging process.

Images were viewed and revisited numerous times, as the panel tried to tease out why one photograph was slightly more compelling than another. The diversity of skills and experience the judges bring to the table ensured that elements perhaps overlooked by one were picked up and voiced by another. It was an intense day that left us all mentally exhausted and in awe of the photographers' passion, creativity and dedication plainly revealed in the images.

So, we're thrilled to bring you in this issue the eight category winning images in our showcase special. We hope you enjoy looking through them. If you would like further insight into why these particular images came out on top, then go to the Outdoor

Photographer of the Year website (opoty.co.uk) to see a video featuring judges' comments about the winning photographs. I'd also like to say a personal thank you to everyone who entered. It is a deep privilege to be trusted with assessing your images, and it is a task that gives all the judges enormous pleasure.

Of course, the adult category winners now go forward for the chance to win the grand prize, an assignment to the Arctic to shoot the Fjällräven Polar dog sled expedition in April. We will be revealing the overall winner at The Photography Show at the NEC on the 18th March. The awards presentation takes place from 13.45-14.30 on the Live Stage, and we're looking forward to seeing many of you there. The new *Outdoor Photographer of the Year* book will be released at the show too, so make sure you come to see us at the *OP* stand if

you would like to get a copy. They proved hugely popular last year. Have a great month of photography!



Steve Watkins

GET IN TOUCH

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East Sussex BN71XN



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ON THE COVER
Daniel Bridge took this wonderful
and engaging image of a hare.

THE ISSUE at a glance Liver And Agranded Regard Android Reg



Richard Garvey-Williams on how to deal with salient elements – page 28



Peter Cairns delves into the lives of pine martens in Scotland – page 36



Fergus Kennedy puts the Fujifilm X-T2 through its paces – page 92



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Stag beetle battle

Solvin Zankl

These two stag beetle (Lucanus cervus) males were fighting near Elbe, Germany. Stag beetles are a species with a clear sexual dimorphism: the male is bigger than the female and has prominently enlarged mandibles. The antler-like jaws, which give these beetles their name, may look threatening, but they are too weak to be harmful to humans. However, during the mating season, when frequent battles break out between male stag beetles, they serve a clear purpose. The stakes are high, since the beetles are competing for the right to mate. They have spent the majority of their lives underground as larvae, taking between three to seven years to reach maturity, but their adult lives are very short by comparison. Males have around three months to find a female and successfully mate before they expire, so they are naturally antagonistic towards each other.

The stage for this particular contest was a low-hanging branch of an oak tree. I saw the bigger beetle (on the right) approaching its rival and prepared myself for the inevitable standoff. They locked horns and the bigger male began pushing his rival backwards. I captured this frame shortly before the loser fell off the branch. The whole confrontation lasted for no more than 10 seconds.

NEWSROOM

CONSERVATION NEW LAUNCHES COMPETITIONS OUTDOORS TECHNOLOGY

Fujifilm launches its first mirrorless medium format camera

Fujifilm has released a mirrorless medium format camera that delivers ultra-high image quality in a remarkably compact and lightweight body. The new Fujifilm GFX 50S is equipped with a 51.4MP sensor (43.8 x 32.9mm) that's around 1.7x larger in area than a 35mm fullframe sensor, and yet the camera is smaller than a DSLR.

The GFX 50S inherits some of the most popular features from Fujifilm's X-series models - including the well-established X-Processor Pro image processing engine, Film Simulation modes and weatherproofing - while offering a higher number of effective pixels. To further improve image quality, the GFX 50S has a very short flange distance, meaning the elements in the lenses come closer to the sensor. Fuji says this construction greatly contributes to the performance of wideangle lenses in particular. The camera comes with a detachable highresolution electronic viewfinder, which can be used with an optional tilt adapter for those who prefer to compose looking down rather than straight ahead.

The Fujifilm GFX 50S is available now for £6,199 (body only), and it launches with three GF lenses: 63mm f/2.8, 32-64mm f/4 and 120mm f/4 macro. A 45mm f/2.8, 23mm f/4 and 110mm f/2 lens will be released later this year. Like the camera body, all the GF lenses are dust and moisture sealed.



Sample image taken with the Fujifilm GFX 50S and GF 32-64mm f/4 LM WR lens.



Hasselblad Masters 2018 opens for entries

Hasselblad is inviting professional photographers across the globe to enter its prestigious Masters competition for 2018. As well as receiving the coveted title of Hasselblad Master, winners will also take home a state-of-the-art medium format Hasselblad camera and have their work published in the Hasselblad Masters commemorative book, to be launched in 2018.

This year's competition is bigger than ever, with 11 categories, including a new one titled Aerial that pays tribute to Hasselblad's history of aerial photography.

Hasselblad Masters 2018 is open for entries until 10 June 2017 and the winning photographers will be announced in January 2018. For full details, go to hasselblad.com

Digital camera creators awarded

The inventors of digital imaging sensors have received the Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering, the world's most prestigious engineering award.

This year's £1million prize honours four engineers - Eric Fossum (USA), George Smith (USA), Nobukazu Teranishi (Japan) and Michael Tompsett (UK) - who have revolutionised the way we see and capture the world. Their engineering achievements span three decades and have helped to transform medical treatments, science and entertainment.

The digital image revolution began in the 1970s with the invention of the charge coupled device (CCD), which converts light into an electrical signal, meaning it can be stored as digital data. The creation of the pinned photodiode (PPD) sensor the following decade reduced the size of light-capturing pixels, improving the quality of images. In the 1990s the complementary metal oxide semiconductor (CMOS) sensor, also known as 'camera on a chip' technology, was developed, allowing cameras to be made smaller, reducing their size and cost. Today, around 100 digital cameras equipped with CMOS sensors are made every second, allowing us to share more than three billion images every day.

The engineers will be formally honoured in a ceremony at Buckingham Palace later this year.



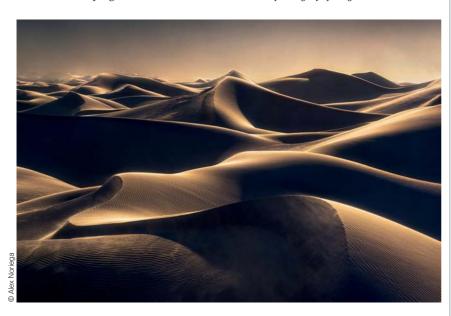
Drones employed to boost search and rescue efforts

Outdoor navigation app maker ViewRanger and software startup DroneSAR have teamed up to allow search and rescue teams to deploy drones as their first response to call-outs.

The new partnership will integrate DroneSAR's flight-planning technology with ViewRanger's BuddyBeacon, a live-tracking system widely used by search and rescue coordinators to track the position of team members. The live-link will enable the search pattern of each drone to be tracked by the ViewRanger app, allowing team leaders to remotely monitor search progress.

Oisin McGrath, DroneSAR CEO, said: 'Rescue teams using the ViewRanger app will be able to monitor their drones as they would another team member. Drones can now be viewed as airborne team members who cover large amounts of ground quickly and easily, reducing search time and risk to personnel. We are extremely excited about the endless possibilities that this partnership will bring to the world of search and rescue.'

To see the DroneSAR app in action, watch a video on our website at outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk



International Landscape Photographer of the Year winner announced

American photographer Alex Noriega has been revealed as the winner of the third International Landscape Photographer of the Year competition. His winning folio features four US landscapes, including the image shown here of Death Valley, California. The award makes it a hat trick for Alex, who was also named USA Landscape Photographer of the Year and Epson Pano Awards Photographer of the Year in 2016. Find out more about the competition and view all the winning images at internationallandscapephotographer.com

NEWS IN NUMBERS

wildlife films are to be shown in Dumfries this spring as part of a weekend-long celebration of the natural world. The Wild Film Festival Scotland (24-26 March) will also feature two photography exhibitions, plus talks by speakers including Springwatch presenter Iolo Williams and Simon King of Big Cat Diaries.

wildfilmfestivalscotland.co.uk



3,000,000 trees will be planted in Greater Manchester – one for every person living in the area – over the next 25 years. As well as greening the region, the City of Trees scheme aims to highlight the benefits trees and woodlands bring to our society. cityoftrees.org.uk

new Special Areas of Conservation have been approved by the Welsh government to protect Wales' marine life. The new zones off the Gwynedd and Anglesey coasts will strengthen the conservation of species such as sea birds and harbour porpoises. In addition, three Special Protection Areas have been created, including one in Cardigan Bay, which is home to wintering red-throated divers.

109 - the length, in miles, of the Cleveland Way National Trail in the North York Moors, which is now live on Google Street View...

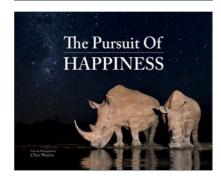
nationaltrail.co.uk/cleveland-way/google-trekker

bison have been reintroduced to Banff National Park in Canada, more than a century after the species was nearly hunted to extinction in the area. The herd will be closely monitored in an enclosed pasture before being allowed further into the park next year. Park officials say the move will restore the animals' role in the ecosystem.



OUT THERE

BOOK OF THE MONTH



The Pursuit of Happiness Chris Weston Chris Weston Media

978-1-5262-0478-3 Hardback, £130

As you can probably gather from its title, this is no ordinary wildlife photography book and that is largely down to who created it: Chris Weston. As talented a writer as he is a photographer, Weston invites us to reflect on his musings – which relate to life, photography and adopting a present mindset – and enjoy his images, each of which carries the Weston 'fingerprint' of looking beyond the obvious. Large in format and beautifully produced, the book is a continuation and



development of the ideas laid out in his 16-part series, A Photographer's Guide to Life on Earth (published in *Outdoor Photography* between 2015 and 2016).

Overarching the philosophical and psychological themes in the text is the question of why we take pictures. For Weston, his reason for picking up a camera is because he seeks creative fulfilment, or what American psychologist

Abraham Maslow calls self-actualisation: 'To find one's self requires a pursuit that aids the flow of our individual creativity and brings us back to us.'

Encouraging the reader to look at the world with curiosity and wonder, this book is sure to inspire you to find new paths for your creativity.

The Pursuit of Happiness is available at chrisweston.gallery/the-book





Bee QuestDave Goulson

Jonathan Cape Publishers 978-1-9112-1413-7 Hardback, £16.99

Founder of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and author of the celebrated book A Sting in the Tale, Goulson (now professor of biological sciences at the University of Sussex) has spent his career researching insects, with a focus on the world's most interesting bee species and a view to changing the way we think about them.

In this delightful book he tells us of the discoveries he has made during his 'bee travels', and how the bees he has studied are vital to a healthy ecosystem. Starting his journey in the UK, Goulson then takes us to the wild mountains of Poland, the Andes and the Rockies. Despite his academic background, do not expect an in-depth scientific analysis of the bumblebee; instead, we are given a humorous, beautifully written tribute to these insects, and hope-filled examples of nature's resilience.

Salt Pans Edward Burtynsky

Steidl 978-3-9582-9240-6 Hardback, £50

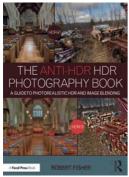
Over a 10-day period, Edward Burtynsky took aerial images of the salt pans in Little Rann of Kutch, western India. This 36-page, large-format book presents the results: 31 geometric pictures of an industrialised landscape. The pans

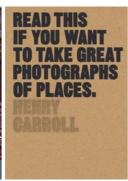
are rectangles of colour alluding to an artist's palette. We learn that oil painting was Burtynsky's first introduction to the arts – perhaps this portfolio is a nod to his childhood creativity.

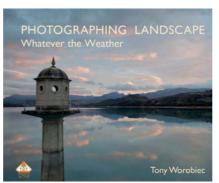
The series is also a continuation of Burtynsky's ongoing interest in photographing nature altered by man. At 4,000 square miles, the salt desert is one of the largest in the world – each year, 100,000 workers labour in the pans, extracting one million tonnes of the natural resource.

This 400-year-old way of life is fast disappearing, however. Rather than looking at the factors impacting the industry, Burtynsky offers another perspective. In the closing text he says: 'The images in this book are not about the battles being fought on the ground. Rather, they examine this ancient method of providing one of the most basic elements of our diet: as primitive industry and as abstract two-dimensional human marks on the landscape.'

HOW-TO BOOKS WITH A DIFFERENCE







The Anti-HDR HDR Photography Book: A guide to photorealistic HDR and image bleeding

Robert Fisher

Routledge 978-1-1389-6234-7 Paperback, £22.99

There are definitely two camps when it comes to high dynamic range (HDR) imagery: you either love it or hate it. Most of those who hate it are referring to images where extreme over-processing has taken over, resulting in a hyper-saturated, surreal look. In this revealing book, commercial photographer Robert Fisher has advice on how to use the technique to enhance your photographs while retaining a natural look.

Like any aspect of photography, good imagery requires a sophisticated and subtle approach when post-processing – the key is to add to the interpretation of your picture rather than killing it. Fisher's in-depth guide outlines key elements to consider: choosing the right equipment, how to use HDR specific software (such as Photomatix and SNS-HDR Pro), a comprehensive workflow guide and tips on how to use automated exposure bracketing effectively.

Photographing Landscape: Whatever the Weather

Tony Worobiec

RHE Media 978-1-9102-2642-1 Paperback, £10

Pictures of landscapes in bad weather are refreshing for the viewer and the photographer, says Tony Worobiec in his latest thought-provoking book. Too often we see photographs of rural scenes in picturesque conditions – where sunlight breaks through the clouds, illuminating the primary subject perfectly. Certain weather we might think of as 'unshootable' – such as featureless skies, landscapes in full bright sunshine, and rain – simply raise new challenges. 'When you look out in the morning and see that it's raining, that's a real cause for celebration,' says Worobiec.

Tips, exercises and explanations throughout

the 160-pages reveal how to turn a negative into a positive as an outdoor photographer: not only will you take more photographs, but they'll be different too. We're told the most successful landscape images are those in which the scene is complemented by the weather – both elements enhance the other.

Read This If You Want To Take Great Photographs Of Places Henry Carroll

Laurence King

978-1-7806-7335-6 Paperback, £12.99

'Invest in your eyes, not just your equipment,' says Henry Carroll in the follow-up to his highly successfully *Read This If You Want To Take Great Photographs*. Other mantras include 'You are a surgeon and your camera a scalpel', 'Photography doesn't need to be tied to representation' and 'When it comes to colour, what is the truth?'

Throughout the 128-pages, Carroll gives us a fresh and engaging approach to photographing places – both rural and urban.

Rather than lengthy explanations of rules and techniques, Carroll delivers his advice clearly and succinctly. Combine this with the striking design and intriguing layout – plus 50 seminal pictures by the likes of Ansel Adams, Robert Adams and Harry Cory Wright to illustrate his points – and the result is an original, thought-provoking title on how to improve your photography.

At the end of each of the five chapters there are 'technical tangents' for those wanting detail on operating cameras.



WHO TO FOLLOW ON INSTAGRAM



George Turner

@georgetheexplorer

When one of George Turner's stunning pictures of the Maasai Mara, Arctic tundra or Bornean rainforest pops up on your feed, you'll feel as if you're right there next to him. George will be taking over *OP*'s Instagram account soon; go to instagram. com/outdoorphotographymag for details.

Alex Mustard

@alexmustard1

Marvel at what lies in the depths of the world's oceans with underwater photography expert and marine biologist Alex Mustard. Enjoy behind-the-scenes pictures and before and after postprocessing shots, and also expect to learn a lot about sea life.

Sandra Bartocha

@sandrabartocha

Sandra Bartocha's focus is light, which she captures with delicacy and creativity in her dreamlike landscapes. Take a moment to reflect on her serene, superbly executed pictures of the natural world.

David duChemin

@davidduchemin

With a mixture of street, wildlife and landscape photographs filling his account, there's one thing that unites David duChemin's work: excellence. He offers a refreshing take on familiar subjects and a good number of black & white images.

Daisy Gilardini

@daisygilardini

Daisy Gilardini specialises in the polar regions and regularly posts images of the animals and landscapes she sees. Expect dramatic glaciers, glorious polar bears and comical penguins and seals.

THE BIG VIEW

EXHIBITIONS NOT TO MISS

Ben Murphy: The Riverbed

» 18 to 31 March, 19 April to 27 May

>> The Architectural Association, London Over the course of 10 years Ben Murphy has photographed the living spaces of a multinational collective that has chosen to migrate to a remote part of south-east Spain. Rejecting the structured society they once lived in, the group set up a semi-permanent camp along and around a dry riverbed.

Murphy says: 'The work aims to consider values and expectations of home, society and notions of freedom, while drawing out some of the inevitable paradoxes, compromises and entanglements inherent in rejecting the dominant system.'

The work can also be interpreted in a different way: Murphy is showing a way of life that's often seen as a romanticised ideal. American transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau's 1854 memoir Walden (or Life in the Woods) alludes to the sentiment attached to self-sufficiency and living simply in nature, and this certainly rings true in Murphy's images. aaschool.ac.uk

Exploration of Land and Nature

» To 2 April

» Dales Countryside Museum, North Yorkshire

This exhibition in Hawes comprises work by British photographers David Higgins and Gary Lawson. While Higgins has travelled extensively for many of his





pictures, capturing images of wildlife in places such as Africa, Borneo and Patagonia, Lawson stays close to home, photographing the seasons and landscapes in Cumbria. Yorkshire and Scotland. The collection highlights the beauty of protected areas in the UK and across the world.

dalescountrysidemuseum.org.uk

Instanto Outdoors

» To 12 May

» Keswick Museum

and Art Gallery, Cumbria Henry Iddon has united photography's past and present to powerful effect for his latest series. Inspired by brothers George and Ashley Abraham's early 20th-century portraits of climbers, Iddon used their 100-year-old Underwood Instanto camera and followed in their footsteps, travelling to Keswick where the brothers lived and worked. The results are compelling contemporary portraits of the world's leading rockclimbers in action.

Reflecting on the project, Iddon says: 'It is amazing to think that over 100 years

ago rock-climbing was in its infancy and adventure sports photography was a phrase that had never been heard - yet with this camera, the Abraham brothers were instigating a whole new genre of photography.'

See a short video of the exhibition at outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk. keswickmuseum.org.uk

Above Morgan, Andalucia, Spain, 2015.

Below Chris Fisher climbing 'Nowt Burra Flee'in Thing' E8 6c, Cam Crag, Wasdale, Cumbria.



EXHIBITIONS WITH A DIFFERENCE

Adrian Berg: A time and a place

- »1 April to 3 September
- "">" Hall Place and Gardens, Bexley, London
 This retrospective of vibrant landscape paintings
 by the late Adrian Berg highlights new ways of
 rendering familiar places. The display is made up
 of works depicting London's Kew Gardens and
 Regent's Park, plus Stourhead in Wiltshire and
 Beachy Head in East Sussex. Don't miss events
 related to the show, see website for details.
 bexleyheritagetrust.org.uk



Michael Andrews: Earth Air Water

- » To 25 March
- » Gagosian Gallery, London

On show will be five series by the late English painter Michael Andrews: Lights; Scotland; Ayers Rock/Australia; English Landscape; and School – with the last series depicting groups of swimming fish. Andrews often used a spray gun and water-based acrylic paint, giving large expanses of a single colour to his pieces. gagosian.com



Format17

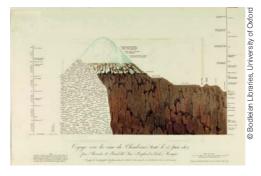
- » 24 March to 23 April
- » Various venues, Derby

This month-long photography festival includes new work by 200 international photographers, a photobook fair, various workshops and the results of the Format17 Open Call competition. Housed in 30 buildings across Derby, the various displays and events will explore the theme 'habitat' and the experiences and stories that coalesce as we negotiate our complex existence. formatfestival.com



Edgelands

- » To 18 March
- » Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Ceredigion
 We all know edgelands, despite often
 overlooking them: the areas occupying the
 peripheries of human development and the
 countryside. We see them by motorways, on
 the outskirts of cities or at the sides of railway
 tracks. The set of contemporary paintings on
 show acknowledges these forgotten margins
 of our landscape, revealing their unique beauty.
 aberystwythartscentre.co.uk



Volcanoes: Encounters through the ages

- » To 21 May
- » Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford
 This fascinating exhibition pulls together
 artwork, scientific observations and first-hand
 accounts of these mighty geological formations
 that have captured the imagination and interest
 of scientists, artists and the public. Letters,
 sketches, manuscripts, woodcuts, engravings
 and infographics are just some of the pieces
 on display.

bodleian.ox.ac.uk

You Are Here: A journey through maps

- » To 3 April
- » National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
 Maps are our way of making sense of the
 landscape so we can navigate through it. This
 exhibition challenges our acceptance of maps
 and poses questions about how they're made
 and how we interpret them. Each piece has been
 drawn from the National Library of Scotland's
 extensive archive of two million maps and atlases.

SIX COASTAL WALKING EVENTS

Walking is a great way to explore the landscape, helping to inform and inspire your way of seeing. Here's our pick of coastal walking events taking place across the UK this spring

Boscastle Walking Week

- » 16 April to 22 April
- » Various locations across

Boscastle, Cornwall

Take in the stunning surroundings of the coastal village of Boscastle and the surrounding Cornish countryside. boscastlefestival.co.uk

Guided Walks on Looe (St George's) Island Nature Reserve

- » Various dates from 8 April to 3 October
- » Looe Island, Cornwall

Join the nature reserve's wardens to discover the island's rich birdlife and grey seal population. Time will be given to independently explore the area. allaboutcornwall.com

BOOK AHEAD

Heritage Coast Festival: Reach for the beach

- » 27 May to 4 June
- » Durham Coast, Seaham

This weeklong festival has a wide range of activities for all the family, including walks, rockpool rambles and kayaking. thisisdurham.com

IsleWalk2017

- » 29 April to 14 May
- » Various locations around the Isle of Wight From chalky cliffs to lush green rolling hills, see the picturesque landscape of the Isle of Wight during one of the biggest walking festivals in Europe. visitisleofwight.co.uk

Walk Islay

- »9 to 14 April
- » Various locations around Islay
 From beaches and lochs to mountains
 and moors, be inspired by the scenery
 and wildlife of the Inner Hebrides. See
 a detailed schedule on the website.
 walkislay.co.uk

Walk Scilly 2017

- »1 to 7 April
- » Isles of Scilly

With 29 walks to choose from, ranging from whole-day hikes to half-day outings, the full and varied schedule ensures you can visit a different island each day. visitislesofscilly.com

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Back-to-basics photography

I read with interest the article in the March issue (OP215)

by Doug Chinnery covering exposure. Doug's tripod-based workflow took photography back to basics by using manual mode, and I particularly liked his approach and workflow list.

He did set me off thinking, though: is there an appetite/market for a digital camera with just the classic controls, lens with aperture ring/shutter/ISO – a digital Pentax K1000, perhaps? I realise we have Leicas, but I was thinking along the lines of a camera that would not require the photographer to take out a bank loan. *John New, via email*

Beware of ticks

Lyme disease is an illness that I was not aware of until a few years ago, when I came across a warning about it on the ferry from South Uist to Barra. Lyme disease is an infection caused by being bitten by an infected tick. The first and most common symptom is a rash that spreads out from the site of the tick bite. Left untreated, the germs (bacteria) can spread to other areas of the body. In some cases this can cause serious symptoms, often months after the initial tick bite.

I bring this to the attention of all landscape photographers who go off the beaten track, often tramping over moorland and long grass to get to a viewpoint. Often deer and sheep will have been across the same areas before us, and there is therefore a risk of tick bites. I wonder if this is a subject *Outdoor Photography* may wish to cover? *Fred Howard, via email*

ED'S RESPONSE Thanks for writing in, Fred. We agree that Lyme disease is an infection all outdoor photographers should be aware of. We'll look into running an article in the magazine, but in the meantime anyone who wishes to learn more about the disease should check out the NHS website which includes details on how to prevent tick bites: nhs.uk/Conditions/Lyme-disease.

Compact condescension

I have sensed a certain swagger in Nick Smith's writing over the last few years that I've been a subscriber, which I have thought on occasion to be borderline. However, his recent article in the March issue (Inside track, OP215) concerned with being 'reduced to using equipment below our pay grade' has gone too far in my opinion. What is an even a greater concern to me is that this attitude appears to be endorsed by *OP*.

A good photographer will take a good photograph with any camera. It's acknowledged of course that the technical standards delivered by a larger sensor and top-end lens will be higher when an image is enlarged significantly, provided the photograph was taken competently.

Nick Smith seems to have bought, without much thought, an unspecified compact camera. He did not say whether it had Raw or manual capability (assuming he can shoot in manual mode rather than setting his 'pay grade' camera to automatic or programmed mode), or indeed whether he afforded the same care in post-processing or editing that he would normally do (assuming he has those skills and uses them). He didn't expand on why his results were 'terrible'; he simply dismissed the results as the fault of the camera.

The danger of his condescending attitude is the pigeonholing of all compact cameras as useless photographically, and implicitly that anyone who uses a compact camera must be content with 'terrible' results.

Richard Brooks, via email

NICK SMITH'S RESPONSE First, allow me to say how pleased I am to have drawn such a strong reaction. Compact cameras do tend to create lively debate and I make no apology for my preference for a decent DSLR. That being said, there are some terrific compacts and there are some excellent photographers working with them. As my column is an opinion piece, I offer my opinion, which in the case of compacts versus DSLRs is a robust 'close, but no cigar'.

ADOBE PRICE HIKE

In February, Adobe announced that it has increased the UK price of Creative Cloud subscriptions, in some cases by up to 60%, due to currency fluctuations since the Brexit vote. We asked you (via our Facebook page) what you thought – here are some of your responses...

Richard Jenkins This is why I've never upgraded from the disc version of PS 5. I wanted to keep it as a standalone on my computer, and my images are kept on external hard drives.

Daniel Bridge Exactly why I've held off going with the Creative Cloud – Lightroom 5 does all I need it to at the moment; I rarely use Photoshop and, when I do, my old CS 2 is fine. I don't have any Apple products, so the other apps included with the Photography Creative Cloud don't really offer me anything. I paid about £100 for LR 5 three years ago, I think I'm quids in!

Joe Hayhurst It's still a bargain.
A couple of years ago Lightroom didn't have dehaze, HDR, panoramas, etc. Funny how people will spend thousands on lenses, hundreds on bags and tripods, but won't pay for software that is as much a part of photography as the camera.

Matt Doogue Mine's gone up £2 a month. I'm not fussed...

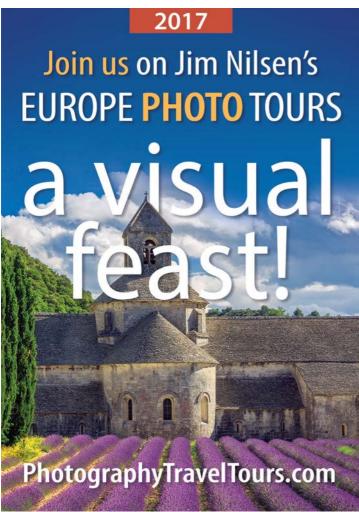
Adam Goodburn I still use PS 5.5 and LR 5. Thing is, if Adobe offered a monthly plan where you could have PS, Premier Pro and Encore for about £20 a month I'd have jumped in. The fact they wanted the best part of £50 made it ridiculously expensive, so what it's going to cost now with a price rise is unthinkable. I'll stay as I am, thank you!

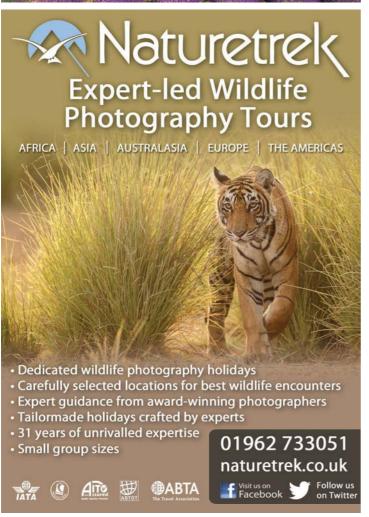
Ian Slade I've recently discovered just how good Capture One Pro is and am considering moving over...

April's letter of the month winner, John New, receives a £100 voucher (plus free p&p) from LumeJet.

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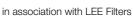






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In conversation with

Ragnar Axelsson

Known to the world as 'Rax', Ragnar Axelsson is one of Iceland's best-known documentary photographers. Recording the people, traditions and landscapes of the Arctic Circle territories, he works in a tough, uncompromising environment, where everything it seems is under threat from the modern way of life...

Interview by Nick Smith

'This moment that I have the good fortune to be part of will vanish for ever'. These are the last words of Ragnar Axelsson's new book, *Faces of the North*, a truly magnificent series of pictorial essays examining the changing and, some would say, disappearing lives of the old farmers, fishermen and hunters of the Arctic Circle. Not only are they vanishing but, due to climate change, so is the ice they have lived alongside for countless generations. What will remain says the Icelandic photographer, are 'photographs. Life will carry on with its hopes and dreams, but the memories will live only in pictures – frozen for all time'.

Ragnar, who is known to everyone by his mononym 'Rax', is reflecting on a body of work that has been in the making for some three decades. Early in our conversation I ask him how old he is. He pauses to consider before answering what he describes as a difficult question. 'At my age you forget these things... 58, I think', says the man who has known no other professional life than that of the photographer. 'I started off very young. I lived in the city, in Reykjavik. But I spent a lot of time from the age of 10 in the country with the farmers that you see in the book'. His famous monograph has existed in one form or another for a decade, but is now handsomely bound as a monumental coffee table tome. Covering the Arctic Circle territories of Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands, it is a strikingly thoughtful and deeply emotional depiction of the people, livestock, wildlife and landscapes of a part of the globe where, despite time standing still for so many generations, time seems to have started to speed up.

'The faces that I have recorded are part of a dying culture, in a way. You see the old fishermen and farmers with their beards, but that is changing. The young generation of Greenland wants to face a different future from being hunters on the ice, because it is getting more difficult for them'. Rax grew up reading books by the great Arctic adventurers such as Wally Herbert, the British explorer who in 1969 became the first person to make an undisputed claim to have walked to the geographic North Pole. 'He was a great explorer, but his achievement was overshadowed by Apollo 11 landing on the moon. His adventures were heroic and brave. I was inspired by these travellers and wanted to follow

Left Greenland.

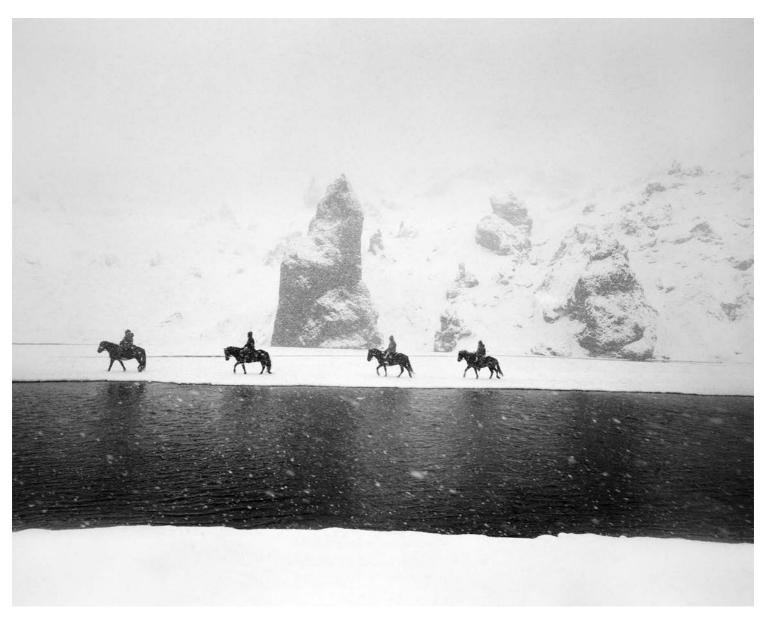


Above and below Greenland.

in their footsteps to see what sort of life there is up there. When I go out into the ice I might go for three or four weeks with the hunters. But it is nothing compared with guys like Wally Herbert. What I'm doing now is revisiting all these countries and photographing it all again, because the changes are happening so fast,' he says referring to the disappearing ice-sheet at the top of the world.

'I want to put all that into my work: the weather, landscape, the people... everything. I've been photographing these subjects for more than 30 years and you can see the changes. There are panoramas where there was once ice, but now it is open water.' Rax says that when he first started there was no real environmental or cultural message embedded in what he was photographing: 'I just wanted to see what it was like and photograph these cold places. Most photographers were going to warm countries and so I wanted to go in the other direction.





Above and below Iceland.

But I realised something was going on.' He then goes on to tell me about an old hunter he met in Greenland, who would stand still, 'sniffing in the air. And he would tell me that there was something wrong. "It shouldn't be like this. The big ice is sick." The weather was changing. The ice was changing.'

The realisation that there was something wrong with the climate, something that could be instinctively recognised and understood by these old farmers and fishermen, was a turning point for Rax. With their great white beards, fissured skin and staring eyes, 'they were like part of nature, as though they came from a rock or a mountain or something. It was as though they sensed everything. It was strange to see, but it was a fact.' Suspicious at first, the older northerners grew to accept Rax and his thirst for recording their lives. 'If you look at the cover of *Faces of the North* – the guy with the beard (*right*) – well, he was very difficult. I took that picture on the fourth time I approached him.









Above Greenland. Previous pages Iceland.

The first time, there was a big storm and there was no electricity and he opened the door like the devil himself. He asked me what I wanted and I told him that I wanted to photograph him milking the cows. He gave me coffee, and even though I don't drink coffee, I had to drink it to break the ice. Eventually, he allowed me to photograph him, and when the picture ran on the back page of the newspaper you could see that the cows were dirty and so they were taken away from him. So I went back and offered to buy him some new cows. But he said that he didn't mind because he'd had enough of handmilking cows, and so we became friends. And then one day we were walking on the beach and this moment happened and I got the shot without directing it or anything like that. It took some time to get the trust of these people, but it was worth it. There are good people everywhere.'

As a photographer, Rax cut his teeth as a newspaper sports photographer at the age of 16. Today, despite being one of Iceland's best-known photographers and one with international acclaim, photojournalism is a profession he still works at. '1 did learn to be a pilot also, but there were no jobs for pilots.

It was a fight between flying and taking photos. But photography became my passion. What you see in my books is outside what I do for the newspapers. I travel as often as I can to do my own photographs. But it's a hard life. I know that.' Making a living as a professional assignment photographer is 'totally different. I even use different cameras. I use Leica and Mamiya for my own work and Canon for the newspaper stuff.' He says he doesn't want to mix up the tools of his trade because he is keen to keep as much creative daylight as possible between the two disciplines. When shooting on commission, 'you sometimes are asked to do things that aren't really "you". And so when it comes to my own work, I want to keep all that out of my head. When I go to Greenland to do my own work I don't want to even think about the professional journalism work. I want to take that newspaper chip out of my head and throw it awav.'

To outsiders, Iceland seems to generate the atmosphere of a very ancient, mystical and spiritual place, and for Rax the generation of people he is photographing seems to represent that old world of folk tradition. 'One of the old guys took me to see a cave and he told me that

there was an elf or something like that living inside it. And the older men talk about people living in rocks. Now, you never hear the younger generation talking like that. Before cars came along, when people crossed the country on horseback, they were afraid of riding at twilight because there were trolls. This is something that is fading away.'

In Iceland, Rax is convinced that all photographers will be able 'to take the picture of their life. I know that is how I feel and I hope that I will improve as a photographer. Maybe this will happen one day.' A little further from home, and despite having worked all over the world, it is Greenland that really fires Rax's imagination. 'It keeps dragging me back over and over again and I think it's going to become one of the biggest environmental issues for years to come. And even though there are some people who don't accept that climate change is happening, it is a fact. In my 30 years - which is just the blink of an eye in terms of Earth's history - I have seen so much rapid change. I think that when our children ask us what we did about this, then we need to have an answer.'

To see more of Rax's work, visit rax.is

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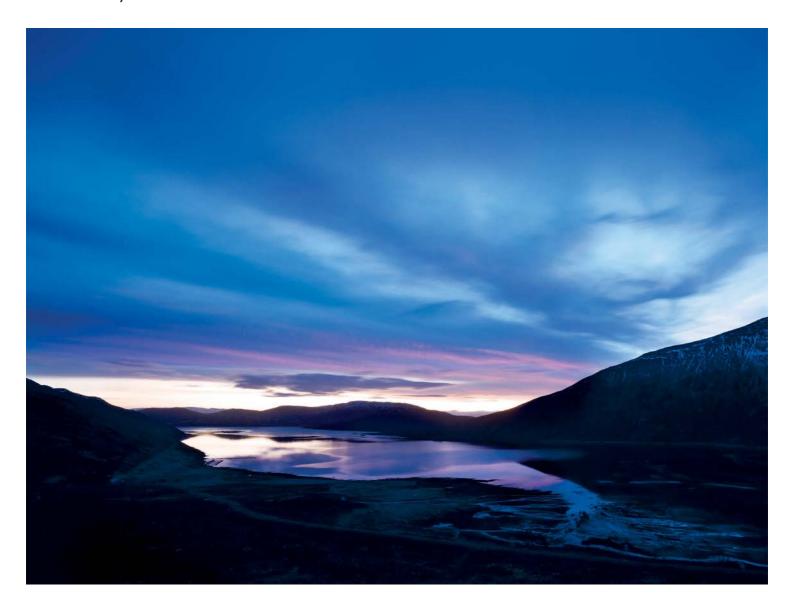


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ONE MONTH, ONE PICTURE



Exploring the edges of darkness, **Pete Bridgwood** takes us on a journey through the stages of twilight, that magical time before sunrise and after sunset when beautiful and subtle colours creep across the sky

Once the bleary-eyed fatigue of an early morning alarm has waned, there can be few spectacles more magical than the psychedelic sprawl of colour gracing a pre-dawn cloudscape. While darkness still envelops us, the rotation of earth to the point where the centre of the sun is 18 degrees below the horizon marks the official beginning of morning twilight.

Twilight is defined in three stages, as the sun appears to rise up below the horizon. The first stage is known as astronomical twilight, and to our naked eye it is barely discernible from the darkness of night. When the centre of the sun's disc reaches 12 degrees below the horizon it becomes possible to discern the position of the horizon, but it remains too dark to walk around without the aid of a torch and we're not yet able to discern any pre-glow from the rising sun along the horizon.

The onset of the second phase, known as

nautical twilight, is an indication to landscape photographers that we need to start preparing for the 'performance'. The first hints of colour are often invisible to our naked eye, because we don't perceive colour very well in relative darkness, but during the later parts of nautical twilight our cameras can sometimes record what we're unable to see, and the resultant images can look surprisingly colourful. The dull light still demands a long exposure, so there's no need for filters to blur the surface of water or smear the clouds.

Civil twilight begins when the sun reaches six degrees below the horizon. As a general rule, we should ensure that we're on location before the start of civil twilight because this also heralds the start of the 'blue hour', when the sky becomes awash with the more strongly scattered blue, indigo and violet wavelengths. The 'blue hour' is a misnomer, it actually only

lasts for around 10 to 15 minutes at the start of morning civil twilight and then blends seamlessly into the 'golden hour', when the yellows, oranges and reds start to steal the show. At dusk, all these phases repeat themselves, but in the opposite direction.

My image of Loch Ainort was made from the roadside at the very start of the 'blue hour' on a cold morning in March. The violet reflections in the loch were unusually vivid and even at this earliest stage of twilight I could sense something special was about to follow. The sunrise that morning was nothing short of spectacular: an explosion of crimson. But sometimes less is more, and perhaps this calmer splash of indigo has a more enduring appeal.

Loch Ainort, Isle of Skye. Canon EOS 1Ds MkII with 17-40mm lens at 17mm, ISO 100, 25sec at f/13, Manfrotto tripod and head



Catching Waves'

CORNISH SEASCAPE WORKSHOPS









6 I just wanted to say thanks for a fantastic 3 days - my workshop was absolutely brilliant! I have come away from beautiful Cornwall with an excellent variety of truly amazing images for my next exhibition, all

furthered by my learning how to process RAW images in a better manner and to confidently use Photoshop. What a revelation!

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LEARNING ZONE

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36 Scotland: The Big Picture



AIM FOR THE STARS

Drew Buckley on how to capture spectacular images of the night sky

LEARNING ZONE

How to maximise the impact of key elements

An understanding of the factors that influence the salience of the main elements in our landscape and nature photographs can enable us to produce stronger images that communicate the stories we are trying to tell. Richard Garvey-Williams explains...

The 'salience' of an element in a photograph is a measure of its prominence, conspicuousness and the degree of impact it has on the viewer. How quickly and emphatically something in one of our images grabs our attention is a reflection of the way our eyes scan an image and how our brains process the information coming in. As humans we have evolved to quickly notice certain bright colours in our surroundings, for example, as they can identify food sources or danger. Red and yellow are colours that particularly 'advance', for instance, grabbing our attention. In a similar way, we are more likely to notice bright objects or features that contrast strongly either in colour or tone with their surroundings.

Our eyes also have a propensity for following lines in images, and no doubt there is some evolutionary advantage in having this inclination. Since many creatures tend to follow worn paths, perhaps our ancestors were more likely to spot predators or prey along their course. Even now, this adaptation probably helps us in our urban jungle lifestyles, where there are many clearly defined lines for us to track visually. As we cross a road, the ability to quickly spot a car racing towards us along the line of the road is clearly a great advantage.

Furthermore, we appear, perhaps more recently in our history, to have developed a tendency to quickly pick up on any written words and geometric shapes within a scene. Personal experience and cultural conditioning work together here, further cultivating our ability to quickly pick out 'useful' information such as faces and street signs. Our experiences and the societies we live in also determine that our eyes tend to follow certain routes across a page – left to right in our case. It is also apparent that our eyes will tend to start at the bottom of an image, probably because the foreground reflects what is nearest to us and warrants checking out more urgently.

Over the next few pages I'll look at how awareness of these processes might help us with our nature and landscape photography.

Right Here, the outflowing stream provides a strong lead-in line to the main point of interest – the pyramidal rock formations of Westcombe Bay in Devon. The setting sun and its reflection provide stark contrast in this zone, strongly defining the outlines of the coastal elements. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 17-40mm lens at 23mm, ISO 100, three exposures at f/18, tripod





NATURE

Typically in our wildlife photography, the element within the frame that we will want to draw attention to is the animal itself, some aspect of its bodily make-up or perhaps its relationship with other animals. Some creatures tend to stand out boldly anyway. Often, brightly coloured animals, such as certain insects and amphibians, don't taste too good, or are even poisonous, and want to remind potential predators of this fact. For most other animals, however, if there are certain aspects of them that you want to highlight in your photographs, it is worth taking time to consider how you can manifest this.

As always, choice of location will influence the nature of the surroundings and their potential to distract. So, photographing in places where the background contrasts markedly either in colour, tone or texture is likely to be effective. The clarity of a creature's outline, and how clearly its shape or form is revealed, will also determine how it stands out. Big influences on this are light intensity and direction, which can make a subject stand out by helping to define its shape, form and texture relative to the surroundings. Side-lighting tends to reveal the three-dimensional form of an animal, for example, whereas backlighting may help to clarify the outline of a creature by silhouetting or rim-lighting. Spotlighting will also work, simply by providing a strong tonal contrast between a creature and its surroundings. Your choice of viewpoint will further influence all these factors and fine-tune your composition. Finally, remember that your camera settings may also affect how the subject stands out from the foreground and background, and the timing of the shutter release can provide the icing on the cake. It's also worth remembering that at times you may want to use similar considerations to actually reduce the salience of your subjects, as when showing how effective the camouflage of a creature is.



Above (top) A low viewpoint in this open environment helped to separate these running grizzly bears from the potential distraction of the debris on the beach. Canon EOS 7D with 100-400mm lens at 310mm, ISO 400, 1/800sec at f/11

Above Timing my shot to catch this male mandarin as it passed through a patch of sunlit water on an otherwise dark channel has effectively spotlit the bird, drawing attention to its amazing plumage and reflection.

Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 100-400mm lens at 330mm, ISO 1600, 1/100sec at f/11, monopod







PRO TIPS FOR COMPOSING WILDLIFE IMAGES

- » Consider trying to find a subject that is unique in some way. Many wildlife photographs work simply because the subjects is unusual, or starkly breaks a pattern that fills the rest of the frame.
- >> Try adopting a viewpoint that exaggerates a bold feature such as the height of the animal; extremes appear to captivate our attention.
- » Excluding all other possible distractions from the frame will, of course, force the viewer to go straight to examining the subject itself. So, zooming in and tight cropping can work if all the interest that you want to reveal is contained within an animal or aspects of it.
- » Blurring out elements either in front of or behind the key feature will also reduce their tendency to steal attention. In this regard, you might consider larger apertures to reduce the depth of field. Alternatively, if the subject is moving, you could consider panning with a slower shutter speed to create a motion blur effect.
- » See if you can use features within an animal's environment to embrace or surround the main point of interest. This effectively forms a frame within the frame, which focuses the attention on a specific area.

 Top A classic example of motion blur focusing attention on the subject's features. The monochrome conversion helped to simplify the background.

Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 100-400mm lens at 235mm, ISO 200, 1/80sec at f/9

Above (left) The uniform background of a complementary tone and tight cropping help focus attention on the unique horn and beautiful golden eye of this nose-horned viper. Canon EOS 5D with 105mm macro lens, ISO 200, 1/160sec at f/11, fill-in flash, handheld

Above (right) I zoomed right in to include just the essential items in the frame to tell the story – a lioness, pestered by flies, tucking into a wildebeest kill.

Canon EOS 7D with 500mm lens, ISO 250, 1/1000sec at f/8, beanbag

LANDSCAPES

As we have seen, where you position a key feature within the frame will also tend to have a bearing on its salience. When studying a photograph our eyes tend to make a journey through the image, the course of which is determined by many of the aforementioned factors. It is particularly important in our landscape photography to appreciate this, and it is often worth taking the time to consider how you can make this journey a particularly comfortable and pleasing one and also ensure that features that you would like to be noticed are indeed detected en route. It often proves a good ploy, for example, to place a key element towards the top-right of the frame, so that the eye takes in most of the scene before reaching this focal point as a sort of conclusion. One can also incorporate some foreground interest as a starting point and perhaps one or two other elements along the path to delay the gratification of the final key feature.

As in all genres of photography, light direction can be a strong influence on how readily the form and shape of structures are perceived. Again, a careful choice of viewpoint and position will affect the light direction across a landscape and will determine how clearly various features stand out. Silhouetting by shooting into the light will, for example, help define the broad outline of trees and rock formations.

In most landscape vistas there are specific features that we compose our shots around. Whether they are isolated barns, intriguingly shaped trees or dramatic rock formations, these help capture the interest, set the scene, define the location and perhaps generate a narrative. Careful timing, both in terms of season and time of day, will profoundly influence the direction and quality of light falling on these features and, consequently, their salience in the resulting image. The colours and textures of the surroundings are also likely to change with the seasons, further influencing this.

Right (top) The zigzag line leading up from the isolated trees to the peaks of these mountainous dunes in Namibia forms the essence of this shot. I only had a couple of minutes to capture this patterning, as the sun was descending rapidly. Canon EOS 7D with 100-400mm lens at 214mm, ISO 250, 1/20sec at f/16, polariser, tripod

Right The high-contrast pattern in the flowing water, aided by a polarising filter, leads the viewer into this Dartmoor scene and up towards the main feature, the twin waterfalls, which are positioned in the upper right and partially framed by the fallen tree. Canon EOS 5DS with 17-40mm lens at 17mm, ISO 100, two exposures at f/16, cable release, tripod











PRO TIPS FOR COMPOSING LANDSCAPES

- » When there are moving elements within the scene, such as clouds or waves, a neutral density filter may be appropriate. This will serve to enable a long exposure to effectively blur out features in large parts of the scene, making the static elements more salient.
- » Fog and mist can also simplify a scene, focusing attention on the parts that remain visible. Snow and frost often do the same.
- » A polarising filter can, under certain conditions, help to define the outlines of clouds in particular. This can help draw attention to them as strong elements in a composition. The effect is most profound when shooting at approximately 90° to the light source.
- » Since our eyes tend to follow lines, either actual or implied, we can often use these to lead our eyes to a point of particular interest. Related to this is the tendency we have to follow the gaze of an animal or person to see what they are looking at. In this case you might position yourself and time your shot so that the gaze or orientation of a living creature leads your eye to another critical feature in a scene.

Top left In addition to adding atmosphere, the morning mist helps define the church and patterns formed by the hedgerows and trees in this view of Widecombe-in-the-Moor, Devon. Canon EOS 7D with 24-105mm lens at 73mm, ISO 100, 1/30sec at f/11, tripod

Top right A simple Dartmoor scene. The snow simplifies the foreground in particular, and following the gaze of the dog encourages you to explore other parts of the scene, including the distant Hound Tor.

Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens at 24mm, ISO 100, 1/20sec at f/16, tripod

Above A 3-stop neutral density filter has served to even out the water in this dusk scene at Hartland Quay in Devon. This effectively defines the two diagonal leading lines formed by the fore and mid-ground rocks.

Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens at 65mm, ISO 125, 30sec at f/18, tripod



Wildlife in the landscape

Of course, many of the strategies I have covered can be applied equally to both landscape and wildlife imagery. When depicting a bird or animal in the broader context of its environment, for example, compositional strategies routinely adopted in landscape photography become relevant. These might include careful consideration of where in the frame you position the animal and how other features, including other animals, relate to it and help balance or create a narrative. This would also apply to a person in a landscape image. Ensuring that the person is dressed in a strong contrasting colour, such as red, is a commonly used strategy, or you might simply position yourself to ensure that their outline is clearly and boldly defined, through contrast of tone or colour, against their surroundings.

Above A simple graphic image based on the line of the groyne leading the eye from the left towards the cormorant perched on the isolated marker in the upper right.

Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens at 105mm, ISO 160, 1/320sec at f/16



Processing

We can often further improve the salience of features in our images through subtle processing measures. The eye tends to be drawn to lighter areas or areas of higher contrast, for example, so localised adjustments involving tone, contrast or even colour may help desired features to stand out. Let me stress again, though, that these adjustments need to be subtle.

Darkening tones in other competing areas is also worth considering – a gentle vignette, which helps channel attention towards the centre frame, is one such ploy. In Lightroom, a carefully set Adjustment Brush is likely to be your tool of choice, painting over the relevant area of the image and then modifying the settings for precision before applying them. In Photoshop, I frequently use Curves Adjustment layers to subtly affect the tones in the relevant area and then use the layer mask to apply the effect solely where it is required.

Conversion to monochrome can also often make specific features in an image stand out more by eliminating the influence of colour. Careful selection of colour filters during the conversion process may further exaggerate this by darkening or lightening the tone of specific colours.

Above Lightening the periphery to form a reverse-vignette helps to further the sense of mist enshrouding the isolated moorland tree. The black & white rendition places further emphasis on the subtle tonal variations. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 24-105mm lens at 105mm, ISO 100, 1/30sec at f/14, tripod

STEPS TO SUCCESS

Plan ahead. Some research can help you find suitable locations and appropriate times to visit them.

You're unlikely to capture the ideal shot on your first visit to a location. While there, think about how returning when the sun is in a different position or at a different time of year might influence things. Be prepared to return time and time again.

Think about what you are trying to say, reveal or express through a photograph, and then ponder how you can make a photograph that does this effectively.

Even during the shoot itself, try to think about how image processing could influence the photographic options that present themselves, as this can have a bearing on how you might bias your exposure settings, for example. It may even spark another creative idea.

Don't forget to think about how filters might help things stand out. This also applies to how colour filters might work for a scene if you're considering a monochrome conversion.

As our eyes tend to move from one strong element to another, arranging them in geometric shapes can create a satisfying journey and reinforce their relationship. Positioning three key features so that they form a triangle if joined by imaginary lines, for example, often works well.

Generally speaking, in landscape work we are striving for a greater depth of field, whereas with wildlife images larger apertures tend to be prioritised. There are times in both fields of work, however, when opting for a very different f-stop will increase the salience of a key feature. Be open to the idea of experimenting.

TAKE PART Enter our 'Leading lines' competition - turn to page 111 for details

QUICK GUIDE TO ...

Shooting the Milky Way

Capturing the wonders of the night sky is hugely enjoyable and rewarding, and you don't need specialist equipment to produce high quality images. Drew Buckley shares his advice on how to photograph our own galaxy, the Milky Way

There's something totally hypnotic and mesmerising about gazing out and up at objects that are billions of years old and light years away. With technology advancing all the time, and camera sensor performance better than ever, we no longer have to leave all the fun to expert astronomers. Anyone can photograph the night sky, and the most impressive and easiest celestial subject to capture is the Milky Way, the galaxy that contains our solar system.





Basic setup

As our solar system is within the Milky Way, when we are gazing up at its stars we are looking from one of the arms our own galaxy. The centre of the Milky Way that is most clearly seen by the naked eye isn't visible all year round, especially for those of us living in the northern hemisphere; the optimal time for photography for us is between April and September. Here's how you can capture a shot of the Milky Way for yourself.

Don't just head to any location at night; you really need to find a dark place away from light pollution. Also, choose a day when there's a new moon, because too much illumination can 'wash out' a starry sky.

You'll find the galactic core (the rotational centre of the Milky Way) in a southerly direction in the night sky, and it will travel west as the night progresses. The angle at which it's tilted changes too. Early in the year the Milky Way will appear at a 45° angle when it rises; in late summer it will rise almost vertically.

A digital camera with high ISO capabilities will allow you to capture lots more information in low-light situations. Switch it to manual mode too, so that you can take complete control of the settings.

Choose a lens with a maximum aperture of at least f/2.8 – the faster the better. Also, the wider the field of view, the more sky you can capture.

With Milky Way images, you'll always be using shutter speeds in the 20 to 30-second range, so you really need a good, solid tripod to create sharp images.

I recommend using live view to set up your shots: magnify your screen and manually focus on the stars themselves. This way they will come out pin-sharp.

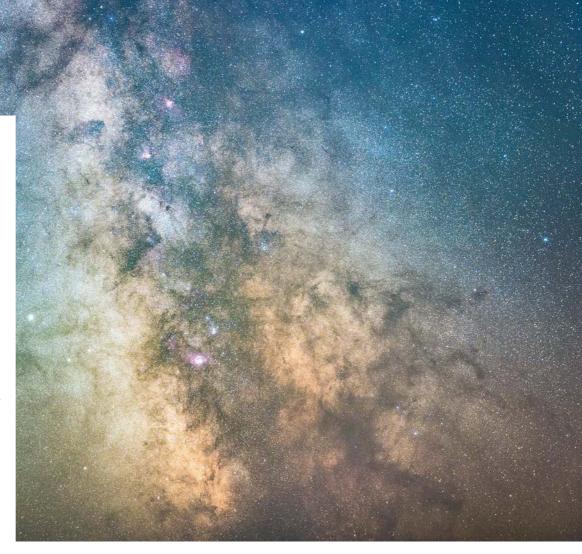
Camera settings

Once you've set up, it's time to dial in the settings. The reason for using a wide lens (mentioned previously) is not only to capture a wider field of view; it also gives a yardstick for choosing the right shutter speed. Although we can't feel it, our planet rotates on its axis one revolution per day. As such, when we shoot long exposures at night, the motion becomes visible by the trailing of the stars. This effect is ideal for star trail photography, but for Milky Way imagery we want the stars to be rendered as neat dots, not streaking lines. You'll always need to use your lens at its widest aperture for maximum light intake.

To capture pin-sharp stars, use the '500 rule': divide 500 by the focal length of the lens you're using – this will give you the best shutter speed to combat star trailing. For example, a 24mm lens on a full-frame camera results in a 20-second exposure (500 \div 24 = 20.83). Remember to adjust this if you're using a crop-sensor camera, multiplying the focal length by your crop factor.

With aperture and shutter speed set in stone, all that's left is the ISO. In astrophotography ISO is your best friend, and I'd always opt for increased sensitivity, rather than worrying about noise. The difference in image quality can be marginal, and there's some great noise reduction software available. Start with ISO 1600 and check how the image looks by reviewing it on your LCD. Most of the time I'll be shooting at around ISO 3200, but I have captured some successful results at ISO 6400 and up. All camera sensors are different in how they handle high ISO noise, so choose the right speed depending on what best suits your camera.

With all the techy stuff dialled in, it's time to get creative! How you capture your images will be down to your own ideas, but I'd recommend starting with prominent landmarks or interesting landscapes to incorporate into your composition. You can even stand in front of the camera for a mega self-portrait. Astrophotography is a form of landscape photography, so having a killer foreground to accompany an amazing star-filled sky can add real impact to your images.





Thanks to the internet we have a wealth of information at our fingertips, and this can be particularly useful when it comes to navigational aids and planning resources for astrophotography. My favourite app for desktop and mobile devices is Stellarium (stellarium.org). I've been using it for years now and it's so useful for finding out where the Milky Way will be on a certain date, and at an exact time; it's a vital tool in helping to line up the sky with an interesting foreground. Also check out the PhotoPills app (photopills.com) for location planning and, to find dark sky areas near you, visit lightpollutionmap.info.

Above Long-exposure image looking into the galactic core of the Milky Way, taken on the south Pembrokeshire coastline.

Left The spiral arms of the Milky Way are reflected in the tidal millpond at Carew Castle, Pembrokeshire.

SCOTLAND: THE BIG PICTURE

Scotland: The Big Picture produces inspiring visual media to amplify the case for a wilder Scotland. In this series, **Peter Cairns** documents some of the principal characters in the country's rewilding story



The pine marten: return of the super stoat

Changes in wildlife populations are often gradual, measured only through decades of close scientific monitoring. Others happen within a discernible period, such has been the case with the pine marten, a cat-sized relative of the stoat, badger and otter. These arboreal acrobats have made a remarkable comeback across most of Scotland, and with new populations now being re-established in Wales, thanks to translocations by the Vincent Wildlife Trust, pine martens are now more numerous than in living memory. Predictably perhaps, traditional voices of outrage can be heard and, according to some scaremongers, martens are now 'out of control'. Given that they were once the second most numerous carnivore in Britain, however, their return through legal protection and increasing forest cover is morally justified, ecologically essential and, for most people, warmly welcomed.

Conservation is a fickle business, and perceptions of individual species are often based on the impact they have on others. Very often the 'bad' animals are those that kill, and the 'good' animals are those that are killed. In the case of pine martens, despite a catholic diet that includes

nuts and berries, their reputation as a ruthless predator polarises public opinion. One emerging trait, however, is casting a new light on this 'super stoat' and generating significant interest across the scientific community. Recent research suggests that in areas where pine martens come into contact with grey squirrels, predation levels are high. The theory is that martens evolved alongside our native red squirrel, which has adapted to be quick and nimble enough to avoid predation. The slower, heavier grey, however, is less well equipped and it appears that pine martens, if they continue to spread into grey squirrel strongholds, could become a natural pest controller of the non-native grey that has, of course, usurped red squirrels across much of its British range. In the eyes of those who lament the return of the pine marten, it could yet turn from villain to hero.

If we want to see our depleted woodland ecosystems functioning to their full potential, natural processes must be allowed to flourish and predator-prey interactions are one such process. The return of this enigmatic omnivore takes us one step closer to completing an ecological jigsaw that has remained bereft of too many pieces for too long.



In the field with pine martens

Location Ardnamurchan and Cairngorms, Scotland Time of year June-August Duration of shoot Spread over two years

The photographic grapevine is remarkable. It never fails to amaze me how somehow, via someone, word gets out about pretty much everything. Such was the case with my first serious attempt to capture pine martens on camera. Via a friend's friend l'd been told of a remote stalker's cottage in Ardnamurchan, Scotland's most westerly peninsula, where martens were being routinely fed and would often show up during the day. I duly booked the cottage and set off with high hopes.

Within a few hours of arriving a pine marten was skulking around the cottage, no doubt expecting a treat. This animal (and, as it turned out, several of its local cousins) was obviously used to people but, nevertheless, I quickly built a makeshift hide in the garden to put the martens at ease and to allow a ground-level perspective. Over the next few evenings, despite the deluge of midges, I secured some pleasing portraits using various imported props. On the face of it, this was a perfect setup in that the martens could be encouraged to go more or less where I wanted them. As the days went by, however, I became increasingly aware of the limitations of the garden setting and my inability to produce images that hadn't been produced by others. For 500mm portraits, the setup was fantastic but Scotland: The Big Picture really needed marten pictures that illustrated the interdependence between animal and habitat; we needed to be able to link the recovery of pine martens with the recovery of native woodland, thereby reinforcing the case for further expansion and connectivity of this habitat, which today covers only 2% of its former range.

I left Ardnamurchan with some half-decent images, but also with the feeling of a job half done. Returning home, I was told that a pine marten

had been raiding one of our red squirrel feeders in a nearby pinewood. My mind immediately started to race but I knew that these truly wild martens would behave entirely differently to those I'd encountered on the west coast. To compound things, I also knew that a good friend had been camera trapping pine martens on the Black Isle and I'd seen some stunning results. I therefore not only had to entice the local animals within camera range, but also try to avoid replicating what had already been done.

Within a few nights of putting out a couple of trail cameras I had three different martens visiting and I could already see a wealth of possibilities opening up before me. Not for the first time, however, I'd massively underestimated the difficulties that lay ahead.



The martens at Ardnamurchan were reasonably used to people, but the use of a makeshift hide helped put them more at ease.



Nuts, cameras, action

Swapping a barely noticeable trail camera for a very visible full DSLR camera trap had the inevitable result of deterring the martens; not surprisingly, for the first two months, save the odd tail disappearing out of frame, I got nothing. Given that I also had hopes of introducing a hide to shoot from, this wasn't a good start. Perseverance, however, is often the key and, slowly but surely, my local martens became accustomed to the strange clicking sounds and occasional flashing lights.

The pine forest itself, with its lush ground storey of heather and blaeberry, was as integral to the images I needed as the marten itself; using a wideangle lens I was able to tie the pinewood to the subject. In fact, the martens in this case are no more than the messengers; restoring and reconnecting native pine woodland is obviously good for martens but, by implication, is equally beneficial to red squirrels, crested tits, wildcats and capercaillie – all species threatened by loss of habitat.

Throughout the summer of 2015 l left a camera trap in the forest overnight, returning each morning to check the results and recharge the batteries. The martens soon worked out that wherever the camera was,

My local martens are not at all concerned about my woodland hide until, that is, I get in it. Their sense of smell is not to be underestimated.

food would be nearby. Secreting nuts and raisins in nooks and crannies encouraged the martens to forage, and although there were infinitely more failures than successes, enough images worked and the story started to come together.

The final part of the jigsaw was to shoot these same pinewood martens in natural light. I have a good working relationship with Forestry Commission Scotland and, as part of their policy to demonstrate the case for multi-use forests, they allowed me to introduce a hide. Unfortunately, doing so had disastrous results. Despite many hours ensconced within it, the sudden appearance of a hide put the martens off and I didn't see one in daylight for the rest of the summer. In September they returned to the camera trap but only if it was sited at least 50 metres from the hide.

The following spring I started my vigil all over again, this time with some success. That said, I've never had a pine marten in front of the hide for longer than a few minutes in natural light. To this day their behaviour is incomparable with those in Ardnamurchan and, although I have some of the images I envisaged, my quest to do their story justice continues.



Here's my pretty poor impersonation of a pine marten; I posed for the camera to check the camera trap was working and to check composition.





Filming a story

I've always thought of myself as a nature photographer because, fundamentally, I photograph the natural world. While a beautifully crafted still image sets my pulse racing to this day, in terms of winning hearts and unlocking minds, we can no longer rely on just this one currency. These days I work alongside others with skills and capacity I don't possess. The Scotland: The Big Picture team is made up of a small group, which, yes, includes photographers, but also features videographers, a sound specialist, writer, editor, producer, designer and press agent. At different times, for different stories and across different media platforms, all of these skills will be required.

The film that accompanies this feature and will form part of an ongoing series is no longer than five minutes in duration but took many hours to record, edit and produce. If it were costed commercially, it would add up to around £15k, or roughly £3k per minute. The economics of filmmaking for a small organisation are questionable but the impact isn't: it's all about storytelling. It doesn't matter whether we use still images in a magazine feature or video for a film; whether we communicate via the internet or verbally to a lecture audience, it's all about storytelling.

With no budget for the pine marten film we started with a storyboard, which lists what needs filming and in what order. This 'treatment' also dictates the pace and tone of the film, the script and who delivers it; whether we employ a voiceover artist, whether we licence a soundtrack and whether we need additional soundscaping. The more layers we insert, the higher the cost. With this film we needed to balance content with budget.

We then put a timetable in place; in the case of the marten film this spanned two years. Once all the material is gathered, it is edited and condensed into what might be considered a throwaway piece of visual media. I would contest, however, that if we (those of us wedded to the vision of a wilder Scotland) want to effect change, we need to tap into our audience's emotions, and there's no better way to do that than by using visual storytelling. One film, one book, one magazine feature might not cut it, but all of these platforms combined into a strong, consistent narrative can effect change.

It may be that the days of the lone wolf conservation photographer are limited, but the potential for conservation storytelling is only just unfolding.

To watch the pine marten film, head to outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk. Next time... In the June issue of OP, Peter Cairns documents mountain hares.



Plan your own field trip

Some species, and pine martens are one of them, require a long-term time investment. It's important to learn about the subject. What time of year works best, for example? Young martens tend to emerge in June when they can be reasonably confiding. Longer daylight hours also provide the best opportunity to capture images using natural light.

Research places where martens are used to people – it will increase your chances of success dramatically.

Learn more about pine martens at treesforlife.org.uk/forest/species-profiles/pine-marten

Read about the Vincent Wildlife Trust Pine Marten Recovery Project at vwt.org.uk/projects/pine-marten-recovery-project

Details of accommodation offering pine marten viewing can be found at glenloywildlife.co.uk

And for pine marten photo workshops, go to naturephotographyhides. co.uk/pages/one-day-workshops/pine-marten-hide.php

Note: Contrary to popular opinion, custard creams, jam sandwiches and smoky bacon crisps are not the staple diet of wild pine martens. If you're trying to attract martens, please use a range of near-natural foods such as nuts, raisins and eggs.

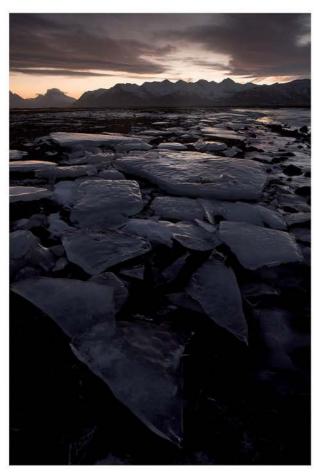
Scotland: The Big Picture is a small team of media professionals – photographers, filmmakers, writers and designers – producing high-impact visual communications, which fuse ecological science with inspiring storytelling. We want to tell a passionate, contagious story that informs fresh thinking and compels people to champion the case for a wilder Scotland full of life. Follow the journey at scotlandbigpicture.com

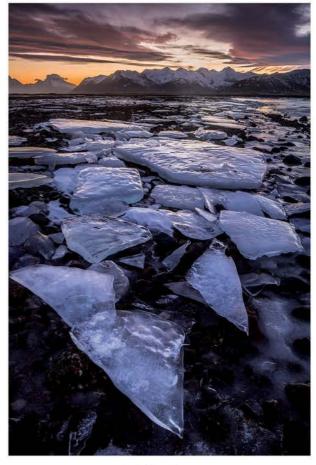






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Outdoor Photographer of the year 2016

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For more information about Outdoor Photographer of the Year (including a judges' insight video about the winning images), and to register for early notice of entry opening for this year's competition, go to opoty.co.uk.

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Wildlife Insight

Alice van Kempen (Netherlands)

Lower Sabie, Kruger National Park, South Africa. In Africa, poachers slaughter an elephant every 15 minutes to supply the demand for ivory - that's 96 beautiful creatures a day. In 2016, as of the middle of September, there had been 36 elephants killed by poachers in the Kruger National Park alone - the highest number since 1982. With this in mind, I wanted to create a photograph to reflect the situation the elephants are in. I chose to capture the sad look of one of the elephants; a dark image that lets you focus on the tusks. Nikon D800 with Sigma 50-500mm f/4.5-6.3 lens at 500mm, ISO 449, 1/125sec at f/10, beanbag

facebook.com/ alicevankempenphotography









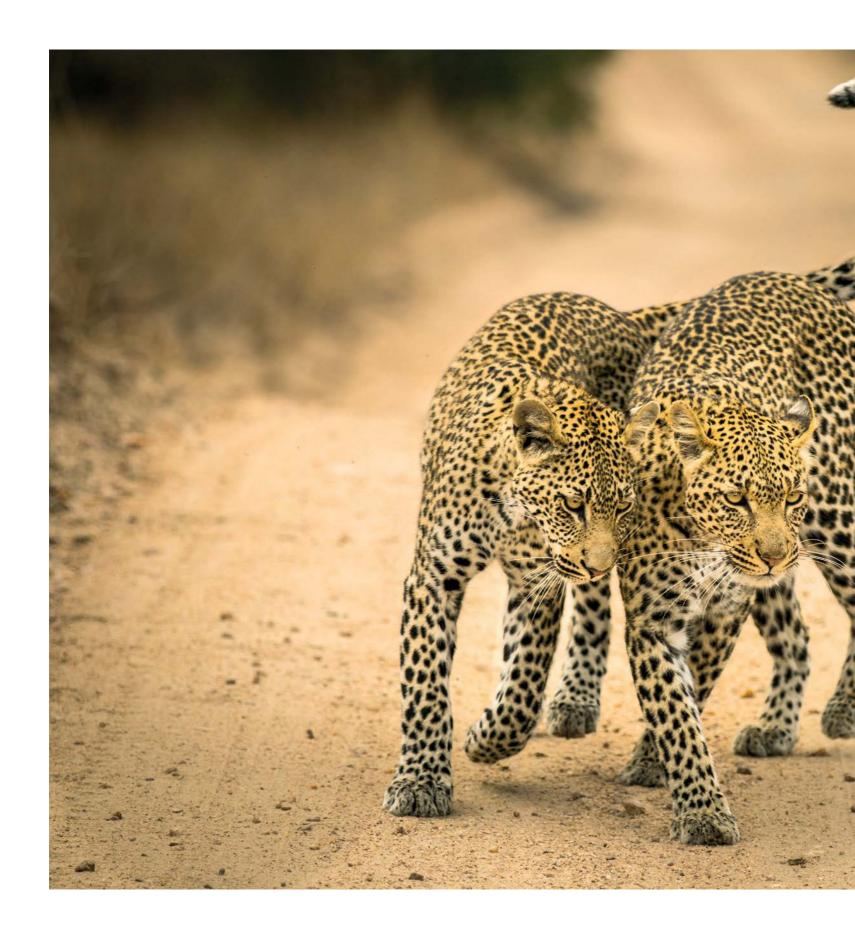
Spirit of Travel

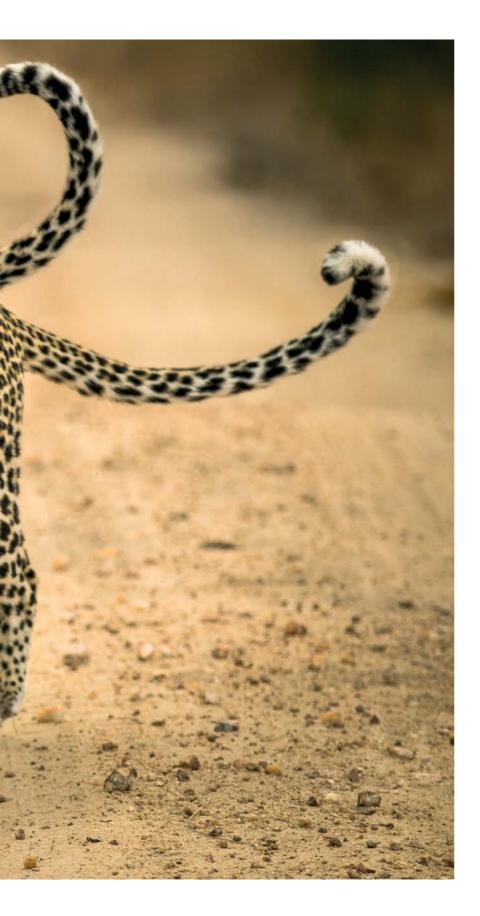
Christopher Roche (UK)

Sinakara, Peru. Around 80,000 pilgrims descend upon the Sinakara Valley in the Peruvian Andes to celebrate the festival of Qoyllur Rit'i – a mixture of Inca and Catholic traditions. During the final night, bands of Ukukus head up to the holy glaciers at an altitude of 5,600m to perform initiation rituals. At dawn they descend back into the valley, carrying large crosses on their backs.

Nikon D750 with Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8 ED lens at 28mm, ISO 5000, 1/125sec at f/9

chrisrochephotographer.com





Young Outdoor Photographer of the Year

David Rosenzweig (USA)

Timbavati Game Reserve, Mpumalanga, South Africa. The eternal bond between a mother and child is one that transcends the animal kingdom. One early morning in the Timbavati Game Reserve, we came across this female leopard. She was clearly searching for something and continued calling until she reached an open road. Just as she arrived, her cub came running out of the bushes. The ensuing interaction between the mother and cub proved the love that the two share for each other. Canon EOS 70D with an EF 70-200mm f/2.8 L IS II USM lens at 180mm, ISO 100, 1/1000sec at f/2.8, handheld

davidrphotos.com

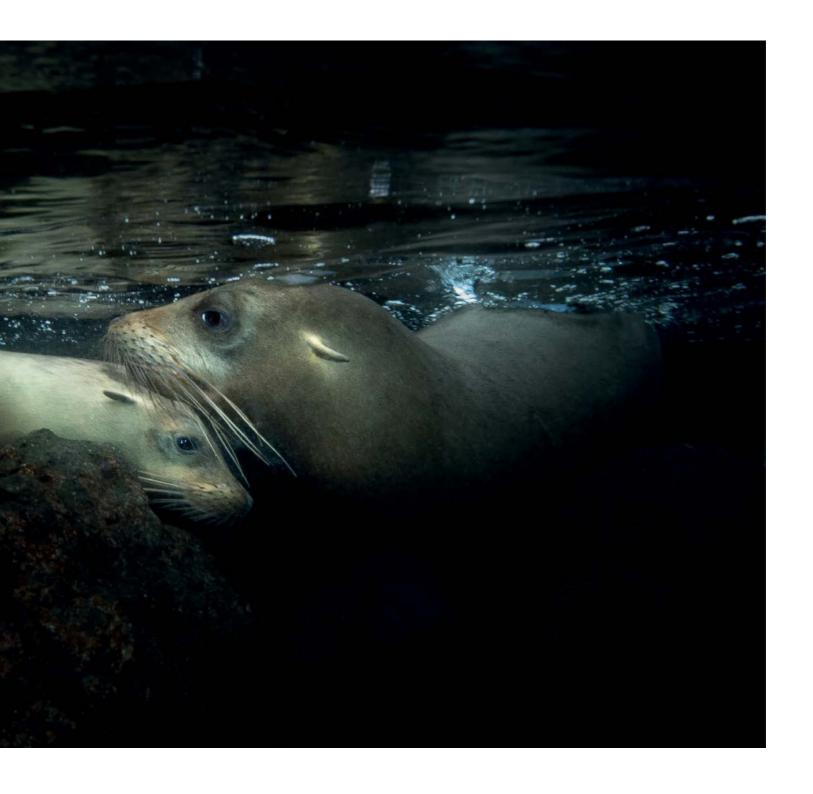


Under Exposed

Johan Sundelin (Sweden)

Santa Fé Island, Galápagos Islands, Ecuador. While snorkelling with a colony of California sea lions I quickly noticed two particular photography challenges. The first was how to avoid the attention of the large, aggressive and protective alpha male. The second was the enormous speed of the animals in the water. Lying very still in the water and using high ISO solved the issues. That allowed me to freeze this moment of tenderness using only natural light. Nikon D600 with Nikkor 16-35mm lens at 16mm, ISO 1600, 1/180sec at f/13, Sea&Sea underwater housing with large dome port

visionsinblue.org







Small World

Justin Garner (UK)

Manchester, England. We grow flowers on our balcony at home, which offer many photographic opportunities. I noticed the rich textures in the blue anemone's petals, and I waited for the flower's textures to be at their best. Choosing to shoot on an overcast day prevented harsh shadows from the sun affecting the image. I used a plant clip to steady the flower, enabling me to take 15 shots that I then photo stacked in post-processing.

Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 100mm macro lens, ISO 100, 1/15sec at f/7.1, tripod, macro focusing rail, plant clip

jags-photography.co.uk

Light on the Land

Stian Nesoy (Norway)

Hardangervidda National Park, Norway. After days of frigid snowstorms, a break in the weather revealed an otherworldly landscape near these hunters' cabins. The little footprints were left behind by a lone arctic fox during its relentless search for food in this barren wilderness. After scouting this frozen scene before sunrise, I discovered a spot with a snowdrift leading into the light. The placement of the hill to the left and the tracks made for a balanced image. The image is captured in a wide panoramic format to convey the vastness of the surroundings. I captured the image just before the sun broke the horizon, making for a softly lit scene that helps the textures come alive.

Canon EOS 5D MkII with Canon 17-40mm f/4 L lens at 17mm, ISO 100, 1/50sec at f/16, tripod. This is a panorama stitched from a series of vertical shots

stian.photo









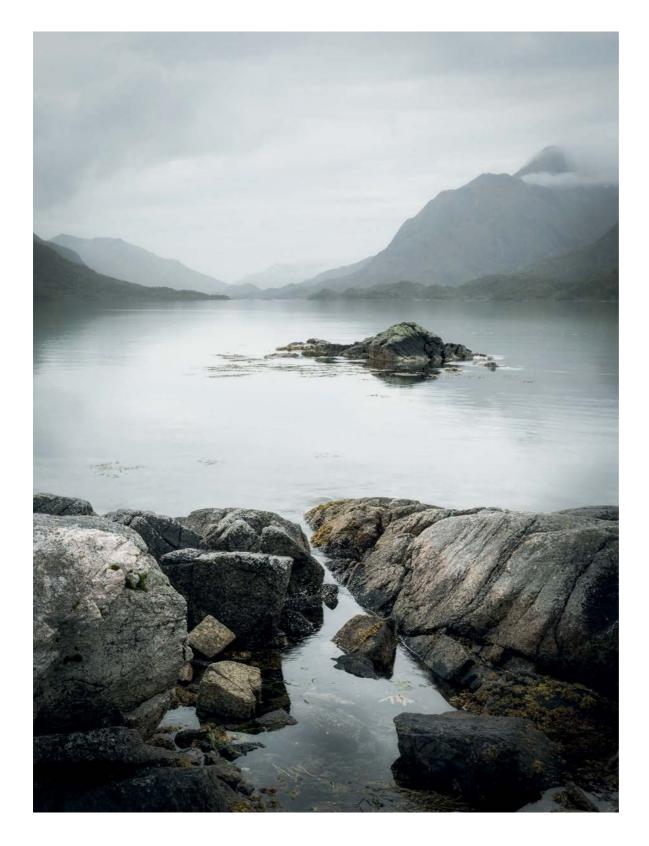
Spirit of Adventure

Kirsten Quist (Canada)

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. On one of the coldest days last winter, I was inspired to capture the luminous structure of this frozen fire pit. I loved the contrast of fire and ice, as well as the way both the blue light and ash-covered icicles framed my subject Halley Coxson. A big challenge was the near -30°C temperature, which caused my camera to malfunction and halted shooting until I was able to warm things up with some body heat.

Nikon D610 with Nikkor 14-24mm lens at 14mm, ISO 800, 1/640sec at f/5, handheld

kirstenquistphotography.com



At the Water's Edge

Pete Hyde (UK)

Gavlfjorden, Holm, Langøya, Norway. Having driven several miles up a minor road, we came to the small harbour at Holm. After a short walk, we were presented with this wonderful view up a small side-branch of Gavlfjorden. The soft, misty light and the calm water were perfect for conveying the peace and tranquility we were privileged to enjoy. Sony ILCE-7R with Canon EF 24-105mm f/4 L lens at 32mm (attached via Metabones adapter ring), ISO 100, 1/2sec at f/16, tripod

flickr.com/photos/39281598@N04

Outdoor Photographer of the Year

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Gold panning in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Confronting reality

Whether photographing marginalised communities in far flung corners of the globe or shooting images on UK streets, **Paul Harris** says we are always likely to be confronted with challenging situations

It was a delicate operation, swirling the handcarved wooden bowls through thick, muddy water. The red silt was heavy and the prize nuggets illusive. My local guide, Young Matuto from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, was clearly uneasy about being here but understood the need for me to photograph the small-scale miners who had been marginalised by a new government mining operation. Within an hour, a few small gold flecks had been dredged and Young suggested we move on so as not to alert guards patrolling the perimeter of the mine itself, even though we were on public land. It was too late, though. A foreman leaving the mine had already spotted us, and he confronted us before proceeding to interrogate me. He knew the charity I was working for but my presence was clearly not welcome and he demanded repeatedly that I hand over the film for 'examination'. Young tried to intervene but to no avail. A crowd had gathered and it dawned on me that this might not end well, so I felt I had no choice but to hand over the film. Obviously there was no hope of seeing the film again but only about a third of it had been exposed. The foreman was unaware I had been shooting on two cameras, so I retained much of the content.

Six years later, I joined a small expedition to the Karakoram Himalaya retracing one of the ancient trade routes from India to the border with China. Most of the route had been off limits to anyone other than the Indian army since the early 1960s. Arriving in these remote outposts, I was definitely a curiosity but was treated with respect and generosity. The expedition army liaison officer was not so amenable. To him I was obviously a foreign government spy. He complained my cameras were much too big and frequently threatened to have me shipped out on the next helicopter. Over the following three weeks he rarely left my side, questioning

everything I was photographing, from traces of the old caravanserais to our own caravan of pack horses winding their way up some of the most stunningly wild landscapes I had ever witnessed.

Those were perhaps naively carefree days when I was starting out as a working photographer more than two decades ago, and the world was full of interesting stories waiting to be realised. I wasn't deliberately putting myself in harm's way. Although pretty mild in comparison to the lot of a full-blown war photographer, these encounters had me questioning how far I would go to get the images I was after. My early forays as a news photographer in London had given me an awareness of the potential dangers. One morning at the photo agency I worked with, I watched intently as a young photographer, buoyed by his magazine cover image of a burning building in Sarajevo, tried on a flak

jacket for his return to the front line. I could almost smell the cordite in his enthusiasm and hoped he had the good sense to keep his head down from snipers deployed to take out the foreign press, whose images and words were beginning to have an affect on public and political opinion.

A little less fraught but challenging nonetheless, street photography has taken a legal and moral battering in recent years. Bouts of confrontation aside, there is still confusion as to what is allowed and, to a certain extent, what is morally acceptable or creatively justifiable. In 1994, France led the way with their draconian update of Article 9 of the French civil code, which would have had the likes of Cartier Bresson and Robert Doisneau turning in their graves. In 2015, the revised Anti Terror Act in the UK has often been invoked by skittish security guards outside both public and private buildings in response to photographers quietly going about their work.

Depending on the time you have available and your determination to get a particular image, some parts of the world inevitably prove more challenging than others. The souks and ginnels of Marrakech exude a sublime synergy of colour, light and shadow like nowhere else, yet

it remains one of the most difficult places I have found to create images of cultural significance without being confronted with indifference, aggression or demands for money. Countries such as Iceland, Myanmar and Colombia are starting to grapple with similar issues in the wake of an exponential growth in tourism.

Striding out into the rural or wilderness landscape may seem like an easier option, but even this idyll has occasion to confront over and above the vagaries of the weather. Driven by her despair over rights of way in Britain, Fay Godwin took on all-comers, resulting in her passionate photographic tirade laid bare in her 1990 book Our Forbidden Land. Many of us try to follow as boldly as we can in her footsteps. Architectural and adventure photographer Quintin Lake is part way through his monumental Perimeter project, which aims to document, on foot, the entire British coastline. Compared to his unnerving experience of being escorted off a Syrian cultural heritage site near Aleppo a few days before the start of the civil war, running the gauntlet of 15m tides on the river Severn or tiptoeing with a full camera and camping pack across fenced off Ministry Of Defence land seems only mildly inconvenient.

In 2016, environmental photographer Rob

Fraser and writer Harriet Fraser received distinctly modern feedback to their latest art installation. With support from both the Lake District National Park Authority and National Trust, they singled out a lone oak on the scree slopes of Wastwater, in Cumbria, as part of their Long View project. A 110m long, 1.5m wide strip of yellow fabric imprinted with the words of Harriet's poem was placed on the ground from the tree's base to the lake shoreline, with the intention of 'celebrating the oak and at the same time creating a striking symbol for the impact that we humans have had on the planet.' Rob photographed it from several angles, not unlike the works of Richard Long or Andy Goldsworthy, and posted it on social media hoping to trigger discussion. They were not expecting wholesale acceptance but nor did they expect some of the more vitriolic and outright threatening reactions to what was a temporary art installation.

Whether the obstacles are physical barriers, people who refuse to open their minds to freedom of expression or those who abuse their power and status to limit others, we all need to adopt a thick skin and chameleon-like approach if we are to continue to enjoy, develop and communicate as image makers.

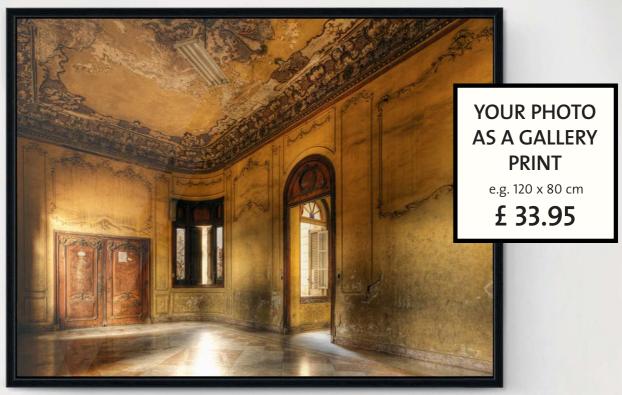


On expedition in the Karakorum, Ladakh.

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Greator Rocks, Devon by Bruce Little

LOCATIONS

GUIDE

3/5 A walk of up to about two miles, over quite easy terrain.

quality paths.

quality paths.

2/5 Some gentle walking - generally less than a half mile - is involved, which may be on mixed

4/5 Medium length hike - up to about four miles over mixed terrain, possibly with some quite steep gradients.

5/5 The most difficult

access. Long hike over challenging terrain (e.g. mountains/summits/steep coastal terrain); or involves travelling over particularly extreme ground (e.g. scrambling on rocks/ exposed coastal paths or mountain ridges) over any distance.

62 Viewpoints of the month

- 1 Stob Coire Raineach Highland
- 2 Martinsell Hill Wiltshire

66 Viewpoints

- 3 Kirkfell Cumbria
- Garnish Island County Cork
- **How Hill Tower** North Yorkshire
- **Greator Rocks** Devon
- **Cwmorthin Quarry** Gwynedd
- 8 Frendal Dale East Yorkshire
- Castell y Gwynt Conwy
- 10 Badbury Clump Oxfordshire

Map plottings are approximate

Stob Coire Raineach | Highland

After pitching his tent on the northern summit of Buachaille Etive Beag, a mountain with superlative views, **Paul Holloway** works handheld to capture some stunning vistas before the sun sets and the clouds roll in

Stob Coire Raineach is a peak situated at the northern end of the high ridge that forms Buachaille Etive Beag. Its central location amid the mountains of Glencoe gives great viewpoint opportunities all around.

After lunch in Glencoe, I drove the short distance to the large parking area located at the start of the footpath that follows the signposted right-of-way through the Lairig Eilde. The path is excellent and you soon reach a fork; the low road leads along the Lairig Eilde, while the high path, which I chose, sets you on your way up to the ridge. As I intended to camp on the ridge, I had plenty of time and enjoyed the steady ascent. Reaching my destination I found a good site, pitched the tent, made a brew and lay down for a bit of sunbathing - well, almost; I guess most sunbathers don't wear a down jacket.

The summit was around 200 metres and half a mile from my camp, so I allowed 20 minutes to get to the top to give myself two hours of photography time before sunset. For me, reaching a mountaintop is always an exciting experience; the way the view opens out in all directions gives a wonderful sense of scale, and Stob Coire Raineach certainly didn't disappoint.

Before getting my camera out, I walked around, taking it all in, and possible compositions soon began to form in my mind. I had one possible preconceived

shot in mind: at this time of year from this location the sun should be setting straight down Glencoe, which could make a great image. Also, looking south I really liked the line of the ridge that leads your eye into hills around Glen Etive. I could see that this image would work well with side-lighting as the sun went down.

The light was still a bit harsh but the golden hour was approaching. As ever in the mountains, the weather can change quickly, and the clear blue sky was disappearing fast as clouds rolled in from the south. I could see that my preconceived sunset image might well disappear behind a wall of cloud; I'd just have to wait and see what happened. The light was now beginning to warm and soften, however, so it was time to explore some other photo opportunities.

I like to work handheld when I can on mountains, as it makes moving around and composing shots on rocky terrain much easier and more fluid.

A 2-stop ND grad was used to balance the exposure of land and sky, and, after checking the histogram, I dialled in 1/3 stop underexposure to prevent blown highlights. The ISO was increased slightly to 160 to give a fast enough shutter speed to reduce the risk of camera shake.

The area round the summit is very rocky and I wanted to avoid a nondescript mass of chaotic stones



6 miles from Glencoe Village • 90 miles from Glasgow Access Rating 🎢 🕺 🤺



How to get there From Glencoe village, take the A82 eastwards up through the glen for six miles to the parking area on the right-hand side at the start of the signposted footpath to the Lairig Eilde. About half a mile from the start, the path to Stob Choire Raineach branches off upwards to the left.

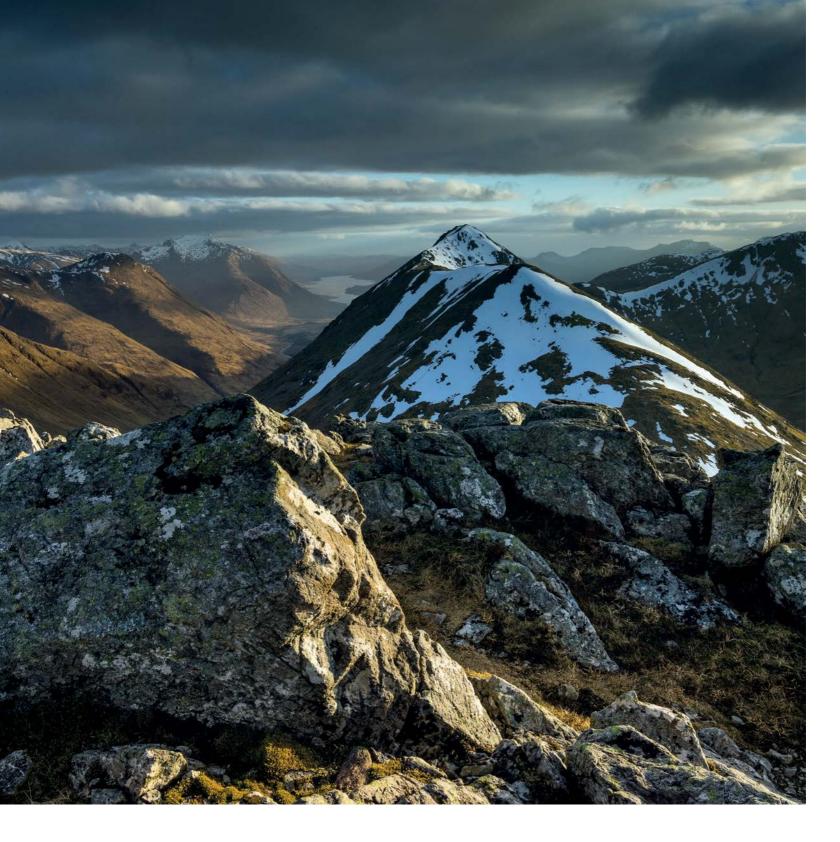
What to shoot Views south along the ridge, down into Glencoe and across to the Aonach Eagach.

Best time of day The golden hour, morning and evening.

Nearest food/drink Glencoe Café, Glencoe Village, PH49 4HP, 01855 811168, glencoecafe.co.uk.

Nearest accommodation Clachaig Inn, Glencoe, PH49 4HX, 01855 811252, clachaig.com.

Other times of year All year round. Ordnance Survey map LR 41 Nearby locations Loch Achtriochtan (3 miles); Beinn a Chrulaiste (3 miles).



in the foreground; I needed a foreground 'rock star'. I quickly found my preferred boulder, which was larger than the others and nicely side-lit. Its shape also had echoes of features in the mountain of Stob Dubh behind, which I felt strengthened the coherence of the image. I offset the boulder to the bottom-left third of the image, which I felt balanced well with the sinuous snow-speckled ridge of Stob Dubh leading the eye through the image to the lovely side-lit mountains of Glen Etive and the distant loch beyond.

With my first image in the bag, I took a couple of variations of the view, playing with including different foreground boulders, and then took some telephoto images, making more of the ridgeline and the loch.

The light started to fade as the sky became overcast and, as I feared, my preconceived shot of the sunset disappeared beyond a wall of cloud on the western horizon. Still, I didn't mind; there was sunrise to look forward to and I was more than happy with the images I had taken.

Sony A7r with 16-35mm f/4 lens at 23mm, ISO 160, 1/00sec at f/11, 2-stop ND grad

WILD PHOTOGRAPHY HOLIDAYS



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Martinsell Hill | Wiltshire

Returning to a regular local haunt in the Vale of Pewsey at the break of dawn, Jake Turner gets lucky with the weather conditions and captures an atmospheric image of a cloud inversion

Martinsell Hill is an Iron Age hill fort and one of the highest points in Wiltshire. It's located within the Vale of Pewsey and the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a beautiful part of the country and a favourite photography spot of mine.

Due to the presence of the Kennet and Avon canal within the Vale of Pewsey, the fog tends to lie low across the area, and occasionally there are inversions. I had visited this area several times but had never quite got those dream conditions, but on this day I had a good feeling as I drove through patchy fog at dawn. Upon arriving at the car park I could see the vale was looking very foggy, so I hurriedly got my boots on and started ascending the hill. With the clear morning sky starting to lighten, I could see the fog swirling around with just treetops poking out from the cloud below.

Once I made it up the hill I quickly set up the tripod and chose to use a 70-200mm lens. I find longer telephoto lenses work well for this type of scene, as they allow me to pick out abstracted compositions from the fields below, while excluding the sky, which tends to be clear on days when the fog is below. I set the aperture to f/16, a little higher than usual, but I wanted make the exposure fairly long to get slight movement in the fog. I took a few exposures before the sun rose, but I knew that for these compositions to really sing I would



need the light from the 'golden hour'.

Once the sun was up, the light started to spill across the landscape, highlighting various trees emerging from the fog. A break in the fog allowed the light to hit a field, with the lines in the crop leading to the highlighted hedgerows. I took a couple more photos and then waited, hoping for the fog to thin out and reveal the tree I knew

was in the background. When it did, I also noticed the fog was creating a natural frame for the field, making the composition even more pleasing. I kept shooting but the scene wasn't to last. The fog lifted rapidly from the field, and suddenly I found myself enveloped in 'pea soup' conditions. As I headed back to the car, I knew I'd had one of the best mornings in a long time.

Canon EOS 5D MkIII with 70-200mm f/4 lens at 97mm, ISO 100, 1/10sec at f/16, remote release, tripod

4 miles from Marlborough • 26 miles from Salisbury AC





How to get there From Marlborough High Street, take Pewsey Road, going across the mini roundabout on to the A345 (Granham Hill). Follow this road for just over two miles until you come to a junction on the left, signposted Wootton Rivers and Clench. Take this exit and follow the single-track road for a mile. You pass a barn on your right at the end of a large field. Just past this is a small car park on the right. Park here and walk through the gate, following the well-trodden path along the grass. It turns left and heads quite sharply uphill. Keep following this path and you will come to a large tree where the path splits. Turn left and walk through the trees until you come out on top of Martinsell Hill, with the lone Scots pine.

What to shoot Wide vistas, long lens abstracts

and wildlife (birds of prey are common here). The lone pine tree is a favourite subject of mine.

Best time of day Dawn and sunrise, especially if fog is forecast for Pewsey. The sun rises opposite you.

Nearest food or drink Café Marlborough, 5 Old Hughenden Yard, High Street, Marlborough, SN8 1LT, 01672 515200, cafemarlborough.co.uk.

Nearest accommodation Castle & Ball, High Street, Marlborough, SN8 1LZ, 01672 515201, oldenglishinns.co.uk.

Other times of year Can be good at any time of year if there's mist or fog. Autumn colours in the vale can be nice too.

Ordnance Survey map Explorer 157

Nearby locations Pewsey Wharf (5 miles); Avebury stone circle (9 miles).

LOCATIONS GUIDE & great places to photograph this month



Kirk Fell, Cumbria

his view of Kirk Fell in the central Lake District was taken from a small unnamed tarn on Haystacks. Situated at the south-eastern end of the Buttermere valley, the fell was reputedly one of author Alfred Wainwright's favourite locations, and his ashes were scattered at the nearby Innominate Tarn. Haystacks gives great views across to Great Gable, the Ennerdale valley and, on the northern side, Buttermere. Small tarns and rocky outcrops give plenty of foreground interest.

How to get there From the A66 at Keswick, take the B5289 along Borrowdale and over Honister Pass. Descending Honister, there is pay and display parking at Gatesgarth Farm. Take the bridleway south-west, then



south to Scarth Gap. From here, head east up rocky ground to the summit of Haystacks (597m), then descend towards Innominate Tarn; the unnamed tarn in the image is reached after 400m. Allow one and a half to two hours for the walk.

What to shoot Classic mountain panoramas in all directions. Small tarns and rocky outcrops together with alpine plants provide lots of interest.

Best time of day Any time of day can provide beautiful light.

Nearest food/drink Croft House Farm Café, Buttermere, CA13 9XA, 01768 770235, crofthousefarmcafe.co.uk. Nearest accommodation The Bridge Hotel, Buttermere, CA13 9UZ, 01768

770252, bridge-hotel.com. **Other times of year** In summer, the sun setting in the west lights the full length

of the Ennerdale and Buttermere valleys. **Ordnance Survey map** OL 4 **Nearby locations** Buttermere (1 miles);

Borrowdale (3 miles).

12 miles from Bantry • 18 miles from Castletownbere ACCESS RATING 🎢 🕺 🤺

Garnish Island, County Cork

arnish is a small island in Glengarriff harbour, part of Bantry Bay in south-west Ireland. The island extends to 15 hectares and is world-renowned for its gardens. On the south-west of the island, an avenue of Italian cypress trees leads to a Grecian temple, with the Beara Peninsula and the Caha Mountains as a magnificent backdrop.

How to get there The gardens are open from April to October. The island is reached by boat: there are routes from several inlets around Glengarriff, with several privately owned ferry services, and the journey takes about 15 minutes. The charge is €12 per person, which includes a tour of the nearby seal colony.

There is a further €3 island admission price, and the round trip lasts approximately two hours.

What to shoot Wildlife, including

what to shoot Wildlife, including sea eagles and seals; seascapes and landscape vistas; architecture; plants, shrubs and trees.

Best time of day The temple faces south-west, so it's worth enquiring about the last ferry back to the mainland in order to catch the setting sun.

Nearest food/drink There is a welcoming café for teas, snacks and light meals at the island's reception. Glengarriff has a small selection of pubs, restaurants and other amenities.

Nearest accommodation The Eccles Hotel, Glengarriff Harbour, Glengarriff, 00 353 27 63003, eccleshotel.com.
Alternatively, enjoy a stately B&B a little further afield in the magnificent surroundings of Bantry House (bantryhouse.com).

Ordnance Survey map Ireland Discovery Series 85

Nearby locations Bantry House (18 miles); Mizen Head (37 miles).



How Hill Tower,

North Yorkshire

ituated on the site of an old 13th-century chapel, How Hill Tower was built by John Aislabie in the 18th century, originally as part of the first phase of the Studley Royal Park garden. Architecturally, it is relatively plain but, in the context of its hilltop situation and surrounding beech and oak trees, it's an enticing prospect for photographers, and can be seen from a great distance.

How to get there Take the B6265 west out of Ripon. After a couple of miles you will pass the main entrance to Fountains Abbey on your left. Keep going for around half a mile and take a small turning to your left (marked Adfield). Keep travelling south until you go past another entrance to Fountains Abbey, as the road zigzags.





Just after this, the road forks: bear left. After a mile you will see Whitcliffe Lane on your left, and just beyond this is a muddy lay-by where you can park. How Hill Tower is on your right at the top of a field, with a gate and permissive path a little further down the road.

What to shoot The tower and trees look great from near the bottom of the path, particularly if you catch a bit of morning mist. Looking back from the north side of the hill is best for a closer image of the tower and trees, as shown here.

Best time of day If shooting from the bottom of the path, morning is best, with the potential for some side-lighting on

the tower. Late afternoon/evening is best for shooting from the other side of the hill and for views to the south and east.

Nearest food/drink The Lamb and Flag Inn, Boroughbridge Road, Bishop Monkton, HG3 3QN, 01765 677322, lambandflagbarn.co.uk.

Nearest accommodation The Lamb and Flag Inn – as above.

Other times of year Autumn and spring capture the foliage at its best. Bear in mind that the tower may be obscured a little when the leaves are out.

Ordnance Survey map LR 98

Nearby locations Fountains Abbey
(2 miles); Brimham Rocks (7 miles).

5.5 miles from Ripon • 27 miles from Leeds ACCESS RATING 🎢 🕺 🦅



Greator Rocks, Devon

reator Rocks sit between the popular Dartmoor locations of Hay and Hound tors and offer relative tranquility for just a little extra walking. Views in all directions are excellent. The rocks can be the focus of a photograph or provide foreground for a wider scene. Nearby is the picturesque Becka Brook, which runs between Houndtor Down and Haytor Down.

How to get there Leave the A38 Exeter to Plymouth road at Drumbridges roundabout and head towards Bovey Tracey. On the edge of the town, turn left and take to the B3387 up on to Dartmoor, taking the left turn when the road forks. Once past Haytor Rocks, take the next right turn, signposted Manaton and Hound Tor, and, after a mile, park in the large car park. Walk up past Hound Tor and down the other side to reach Greator Rocks after just over half a mile. What to shoot Views over the valley towards Haytor Rocks or, in the other direction, back towards Hound Tor. Nearby are the remains of a medieval



village, which also offer good photographic opportunities. **Best time of day** Early morning of the second of the

Best time of day Early morning or late afternoon.

Nearest food/drink Home Farm Café, Parke, Bovey Tracey, TQ13 9JQ, 01626 830016, homefarmcafe.co.uk.

Nearest accommodation Higher Venton Farmhouse B&B, Widecombein-the-Moor, Newton Abbott, TQ13 7TF, 01364 621235, ventonfarm.com.

Other times of year Late spring/early summer for stunning bluebell displays on the nearby Holwell Lawn.

Ordnance Survey map LR 191
Nearby locations Bowerman's Nose
(1 mile); Haytor Rocks (3 miles).

Cwmorthin Quarry,

Gwynedd

he atmosphere and sense of history will stay with you some time after you have left the long-abandoned slate quarry of Cwmorthin. The dereliction seems to complement the stark beauty of the surrounding landscape, while signs of the site's industrial past, which are gradually being reclaimed by the earth, offer endless possibilities for photography.

How to get there From Porthmadog, follow the A497 and then the A496 east towards Blaenau Ffestiniog. Leave the A496 at the village of Tanygrisiau, where parking is available by following the road under the railway and up the hill. A track then leads you up into the quarry.

What to shoot Abandoned slate buildings and works, and a waterfall, river and lake - all set within a steepsided, rugged valley.

Best time of day Any time and in any weather conditions; the location



is well suited to changeable weather and dramatic light.

Nearest food/drink Lakeside Café. Tanygrisiau, Blaenau Ffestiniog, LL41 3TP, 01766 830950.

Nearest accommodation Bryn Elltyd, Tanygrisiau, Blaenau Ffestiniog, LL41 3TW, 01766 831356/07905 568127, ecoguesthouse.co.uk.

Other times of year All year round, although wintry conditions suit the location particularly well.

Ordnance Survey map LR 115/124 Nearby locations Morfa Harlech Nature Reserve (14 miles); Coed Y Brenin (16 miles).



12 miles from Porthmadog • 73 miles from Chester ACCESS RATING 常常常

11 miles from Driffield • 20 miles from York ACCESS RATING 🎢 🔅 🤺 🤻

Frendal Dale, East Yorkshire

he Yorkshire Wolds may not be as dramatic as some other nearby locations but they can look beautiful nonetheless. They have an extensive network of linear earthworks dating from the bronze age, which can be useful foreground subjects, and the steep chalk valleys can create wonderful shapes that are emphasised when the sun is low in the sky. Easy to access, it's hard not to pay them a visit.

How to get there From York, follow the A166 east towards Driffield. Continue through Stamford Bridge and, after about eight miles, turn right on to York Lane (towards Huggate) - there's enough room by the side of the road for a few cars. After parking up, walk down the road for a couple of hundred metres before heading west along a farm track.

After about 200m, the view opens out in front of you.

What to shoot Beautiful views looking down the valley.

Best time of day Sunset. In winter the sun sets directly down the valley, while summer sunsets provide beautiful sidelight.

Nearest food/drink The Balloon Tree, Stamford Bridge Road, Gate Helmsley, York, YO411NB, theballoontree.co.uk.

Nearest accommodation Wolds Village, Manor Farm, Bainton, YO25 8EF, woldsvillage.co.uk.

Other times of year Late summer is also lovely, with long grasses and nice sunset sidelight.

Ordnance Survey map Explorer 294 Nearby locations Horse Dale (1 mile); Garrowby Hill (4 miles).







Castell y Gwynt,

Conwy

astell y Gwynt (Castle of the Wind) is a weathered, frost-shattered outcrop of rocks standing 16m tall near the peak of Glyder Fach (972m). On a clear day from this vantage point you can see stunning views of Snowdon (Yr Wyddfa), the famous Crib Goch to the south-west and, to the north-west, Carnedd Dafydd and the Ffrancon valley.

How to get there From Bangor, take the A55 then turn towards Bethesda along the A5 trunk road, and on into the Nant Ffrancon valley. From Betws-y-Coed, travel along the A5 to Capel Curig, then continue on to Llyn Ogwen. Park at the



Ogwen Centre and follow the path to Llyn Idwal. Skirt the lake on the eastern side and follow the steep path up through Devil's Kitchen. At the top of the pass, bear left up a steep scree slope to the summit of Glyder Fawr. Once on the top plateau, follow the path towards the peak of Glyder Fach.

What to shoot Stunning rock formations and spectacular peaks.

Best time of day Early or late in the day. **Nearest food/drink** There are facilities

at Llyn Ogwen, including a café. **Nearest accommodation** Gwern Gof

Isaf campsite and bunkhouse, Capel Curig, Betws-y-Coed, LL24 0EU.
Alternatively, there are numerous places to stay in Betws-y-Coed.

Other times of year Snow adds drama, but full winter kit is necessary. It's also great for night shoots at any time of year.

Ordnance Survey map OL 17 Nearby locations Cwm Idwal (1 mile); Snowdon (15 miles).

2 miles from Faringdon • 20 miles from Oxford ACCESS RATING 🛪

Badbury Clump, Oxfordshire

adbury Clump is a small National Trust-managed copse of beech trees in rural Oxfordshire. Found on Badbury Hill near Swindon, it is a popular place year-round, but it comes alive in spring, when the woodland floor is carpeted with bluebells.

How to get there Badbury Hill lies on the B4019 between Coleshill and Faringdon. Just off this road there is a small pay and display car park operated by the National Trust (SN77NJ).

What to shoot Flowers, landscapes and wildlife. There are good opportunities for





experimenting with intentional camera movement and multiple exposures. **Best time of day** Dawn/sunrise. The small woodland faces out to open fields

small woodland faces out to open fields, so the sunlight pours in.

Nearest food/drink The Quad Tea & Coffee Rooms, 14 Market Place, Faringdon, SN7 7HP, 01367 602009, thequadfaringdon.co.uk.

Nearest accommodation The Old Crown Coaching Inn, 25 Market Place, Faringdon, SN7 7HU, 01367 242744, oldcrown.relaxinnz.co.uk.

Other times of year October/ November for autumnal colours. Mist can add atmosphere.

Ordnance Survey map Explorer 170 Nearby locations Buscot Cheese Wharf (5 miles); Uffington White Horse (7 miles).



Interview with Olympus Ambassador

Marcus Clackson

Olympus Ambassador Marcus Clackson has been a prolific commercial and editorial photographer for the past two decades. He likes to shoot his images in a freewheeling style, with a creative freedom he learned way back at art school...

'Whatever you're photographing, it's all about getting the shot,' says Marcus Clackson. 'Whether it is editorial, commercial or personal work, it's all about portraying your best ideas'. For Marcus, the most exciting thing about being a professional photographer is that you never quite know what the next assignment will be. 'Sometimes it feels as though you're photographing a lot of portraits, while, at other times you seem to be working more in lifestyle'. Marcus says that, over the years, he's worked with a broad cross-section of clients, from Sunday supplements to the rock music press. 'But I've

also worked with quite a few arts magazines, photographing directors, actors and artists'.

Finding the darkroom

Marcus studied art at Bath College of Art (now called Bath School of Art and Design), which had 'a really good photographic department'. Although he started out as a painter and print-maker, he soon gravitated to where his primary interest lay, spending more and more time hanging out with technicians in the darkroom. 'That's how I cut my teeth and that was my training. But it was fundamentally an

art degree, which meant that when I finished, I still had a lot to learn about photography. Luckily I had a tutor who had worked in advertising in London. He helped me to get a full-time assisting job for a couple of really good photographers'. After this initial role, Marcus progressed into the commercial world of design and advertising agencies, where 'it was always interesting and varied work. We'd be taking pictures of everything from Formula 1 to shire horses, as well as food, still life and people. It was a great time and I really learned a lot at that studio'.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

There's a big difference between editorial and commercial, says Marcus. 'I think with editorial quite a lot of what's happening is out of your hands. You plan and hope for the best eventuality, but you really just have to roll with it. In the commercial environment you're more in control of the end product and you're better placed to make the creative decisions. At the end of the day you've just got to love what you do. For me, there isn't a subject I don't like photographing. I've often said that so long as I'm taking pictures, it's a wonderful job'.

Back to nature

'People often ask me what type of photography I concentrate on, and the answer is mostly people, portraiture and lifestyle. That's been the main focus of the past 20 years and the core of what I still do today,' Marcus says. 'But recently I've been experimenting with photographing landscapes and I've also been shooting a lot more nature. And I absolutely love it. I have recently been working on a macro landscape project with the new OM-D E-M1 Mark II and the M.Zuiko Digital ED 30mm 1:3.5 macro and 60mm 1:2.8 macro lenses. The lightweight and robust all-weather body is great for handholding, especially with the superb in-built five-axis image stabilisation, and its smaller size really allows me to get into the action in any conditions. The new super-fast focusing makes it ideal for working with subjects that move around erratically, and I can capture a pin-sharp point of focus even with a wide-open aperture. The 30mm macro lens lets me get in close with small subjects to achieve quite ambient and unusual bokeh results, giving the images a very different style and feel.'

Marcus says he finds that photography brings together his artistic way of seeing things with a more literal approach to life. 'Art taught me that there are no rules. When I give talks now to either amateurs or professionals the one thing I find myself often saying is, "don't get too hung up on the way other people do things". I'm a firm believer in experimentation. There's no right or wrong.'

To see more of Marcus Clackson' work, go to marcusphoto.co.uk. For information about Olympus cameras, check out olympus.co.uk.

Opposite Hoar frost.

Olympus OM-D E-M1 MkII with 60mm f/2.8 macro lens, ISO 1000, 1/3200sec at f/4.5, handheld

Right (top) Water on lime.

Olympus OM-D E-M1 MkII with 30mm f/3.5 macro lens. ISO 2000. 1/250sec at f/4. handheld

Right (bottom) Hoar frost on plant at sunrise. Olympus OM-D E-M5 MkII with 60mm f/2.8 macro lens, ISO 1000, 1/1600sec at f/20, handheld





NEXT MONTH

OP217 ON SALE 6 APRIL 2017

How to photograph the sublime

- Rachael Talibart

Interview with fine art landscape guru Colin Bell International Garden Photographer of the Year – the winners! On test: Canon EOS M5 – their flagship mirrorless camera

YOUR CHANCE TO TAKE PART

See your work in print + win great prizes!

VIEWPOINT OF THE MONTH

Your location pictures and words could earn you up to £200! Send us up to 10 of your best digital images or slides from your favourite UK & Irish viewpoints. If they're selected, we will commission you to write up your location.

VIEWPOINTS

Your photos of your favourite locations could earn you £50! Send us up to 10 of your best digital images or slides and, if one is selected, you will earn £50.

IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING THIS MONTH...

Take on our 'Leading lines' photo challenge (see page 111), and as well as the chance of being featured in the August 2017 issue of OP, you could also win a Sprayway Mylas jacket worth £140. Available in men's and women's sizes, this light and compressible down jacket will keep you warm and comfortable.

LETTERS

Please send your views, opinions and musings to claire.blow@thegmcgroup.com, or send them online or by post. If your letter is our 'Letter of the Month' you'll win a prize; this month's winner received a £100 voucher from Lumelet. Please limit your letters to 200 words or less and be aware that they may be edited.

WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Tell us the name of the village featured on page 112 and this month you could win a superb Coleman Kobuck Valley 3 tent, worth £119! Featuring Coleman's BlackOut Bedroom technology, which keeps 99% of daylight out to help you have a longer and more restful sleep, the tent includes fibreglass poles and a high performance WeatherTec flysheet with an impressive 4,500mm hydrostatic head. The tent's ventilation openings offer good airflow and reduced condensation, plus a riser PE groundsheet in the porch and a fully integrated bedroom groundsheet ensures clean and dry camping.

READER GALLERY

Send us your very best outdoor images, and if vou're chosen as our winner vou'll receive a superb prize. Last month's winner received a Case Logic Kontrast Pro-DSLR Backpack worth £129.99. Offering stability and protection from the ground up thanks to its water-resistant DuraBase, this ergonomic backpack stores and protects your pro DSLR and accessories wherever you go.

WRITE FOR US!

We are always on the lookout for inspiring new features. If you have a great idea for an article then please send a short outline (no more than 60 words), plus five accompanying high-res JPEG images for our consideration.

SEND POSTAL SUBMISSIONS TO: Outdoor Photography, 86 High Street, Lewes,

Please include a SAE if you would like your

We are unable to accept speculative submissions

via email, so please do not send work in this way,

unless requested to do so by a member of the OP

editorial team. Send via post or online instead.

East Sussex, BN7 1XN

submission returned.

EMAIL ENTRIES

RETURN OF YOUR WORK

ONLINE SUBMISSIONS SYSTEM

It's easy to submit your work to us online. Go to outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk and click the submissions link for full details.

DIGITAL SUBMISSIONS

When burning your CD, create two folders: one containing TIFF or JPEG - saved at quality 10 or above - files, saved at 300ppi, RGB or CMYK, and MAC compatible; and a second folder with low-res 72ppi JPEG files. Only send 8-bit files (not 16-bit files) and flatten any layers. Add your own name to the image file names. If sending Viewpoints for multiple months, please add the month to each image filename. Please write your name and contact details on your CD, or include this information in a text file on the CD. Finally, print off, if you can, a contact sheet of thumbnails of the images included on the CD.

POSTAL SUBMISSION - CHECKLIST

1 Send low high-res versions of your images 2 Add your name to your image filenames

3 Write your name and contact details on your CD

WEBSITE SUBMISSIONS

You can send us links to your website, for us to view your general work only. Please note that strictly no correspondence will be entered into regarding website submissions. Send the link to opweb@thegmcgroup.com.

PLEASE NOTE Due to the many submissions we receive from our readers each month, if you have not heard from us within 10 weeks (except for Viewpoints) then it is unlikely we will be using your work in the magazine on this occasion.

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Outdoor

POSTAL ENTRY FORM

VIEWPOINTS

My images were all taken in the month of	
The name of my location	
(We are currently looking for images taken in August, September and October – please a month to each image filename)	dd
READER GALLERY	
ONE THING THIS MONTH LEADING LINES Please supply captions and full technical details for each image	
LETTERS	
WHERE IN THE WORLD?	
OP READER DAYS (I have included my full contact details, including daytime telephone number)	
GENERAL SUBMISSION Please include a short synopsis and up to five accompanying images	 ve
I have included a SAE and would like my worreturned $\ \square$	rk
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A wilderness of the mind

When visiting wild locations around the UK, it's easy to believe that the rugged scenes we see are remnants of a pre-human age. Christopher Swan explores whether our deep-seated yearning for natural landscapes matches reality on the ground

What do you see when you look at this image? Perhaps you see one of the classic views of the Scottish Highlands: the Scots pines, the loch and the snow-capped mountains in the distance. It's the romantic view of a Highland dawn, and you could almost say it's the quintessential Highland scene; all it needs is a stag drinking from the loch.

It's a place I've visited often, but recently I've begun to question this landscape. Take the melancholy stunted Scots pine in the foreground, its gnarled form twisting like an old man's back beneath a heavy load. Or cast your eye up to the hills rising above the loch, stripped of all vegetation bar the hardiest of grasses. Or look at the dark ranks of commercial forestry that cloak the far hillsides. This landscape isn't natural. It's as shaped by human activity as our cities are.

The immediate area is an arboreal zoo, a protected area of a once common but now endangered landscape typology. It is one of the last remnants of the great Caledonian Forest that once covered most of Scotland; a temperate rainforest in which wolves, boars and bears roamed. Much of the forest was cut down to provide grazing land and to supply timber for shipbuilding or fuel for industries. The explosion in the number of deer in the region since the removal of apex predators, such as wolves, has ensured that unaided regeneration of these forests cannot occur. This area at Loch Tulla is now fenced off and should hopefully regenerate, but it needs careful management and, crucially, time.

Perhaps you already know the background story about the landscape, or perhaps you'd rather not know.

Maybe in a time of fake news, global

strife and stress we subconsciously crave a place of wildness, even if it is an idealised notion of what constitutes a natural landscape. We want to believe that wild land, unsullied by man, is still out there and within easy reach.

So what does this mean for the photographer? Well, maybe not a lot. Does it even matter that this isn't a natural landscape? I'm sure many

will be happy to 'bag' this image and move on to the next location without reflecting on what they are actually shooting. I feel, however, that gaining an understanding of the processes, both human and natural, that shape the landscape enriches our experience, deepens our connection and ultimately leads to a greater appreciation of the special places we love.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Tom Way

Tom Way is a British wildlife photographer who has made a niche for himself specialising in portraiture of the great mammals of the African savannah. Nick Smith puts him in the spotlight ...

Nick Smith You work predominantly in Africa?

Tom Way I specialise in photographing mammals, and I don't think there's a better place on the planet than Africa in terms of variety. I look for majesty, power and beauty in a wildlife portrait. These three words describe African mammals such as lions, leopards and elephants. I always say that you can see why you'd want to blow up a shot of an elephant and hang it above your fireplace. But you wouldn't blow up a puffin or a badger.

NS How did you get into wildlife photography?

TW I was madly in love with sport when at school and studied sports and coaching at university, and so to end up as a wildlife photographer comes from a slightly different angle on things. But after leaving university I found that my passion for travel, wildlife and photography all came together. I wasn't interested in travel snaps, though; I wanted to photograph wildlife in the most aesthetic way possible.

NS What sort of training did you have? TW None, and to be honest, I was terrible at art. I'm self-taught in the way that I think most wildlife photographers are these days. I think the great thing about digital is you can review your work as you are taking it, meaning that there's a great deal of scope for improvement while you are working.

NS How difficult is wildlife photography? TW In terms of the work I do, it's quite simple in that what I'm doing is trying to take photographs of wildlife at destinations where I can be fortunate enough to see lots of it. And the logistics are fairly simple too. Given the time and money, most people can go to Africa to get shots of these animals. The difficult bit is taking an exceptional image that will hang on someone's wall and stand the test of time.





NS What made you want to concentrate on wildlife photography?

TW You can see the best landscapes by the most talented photographers in the world, but if they are next to a wildlife image then I'm drawn to the 'wow' factor of the wildlife shot. There are three things that I look for when composing an image. Character and personality are essential. Simplicity is also important. Then of course there is the light. But character is the most important ingredient for an outstanding wildlife portrait image.

NS How much goes into achieving this? TW Well, you have to choose your location very carefully. In Africa I enjoy the places where there is a beautiful canvas to work with, which in my mind is open terrain. I love the uncluttered,

open savannah in places such as the Maasai Mara or Amboseli National Park, where there is nothing around. What I don't want to include is what I describe as 'tension points'.

NS What is a tension point and why is it important?

TW One of the things I'm looking for is separation. Very rarely do I have more than one subject in the frame. I don't want trees or branches. Anything that distracts the viewer in terms of clutter or extraneous material has to be taken out. I take portraits and so I don't want action shots or busy backgrounds. Some of my images look like they've been shot in the studio, but they haven't. It's a matter of controlling the viewer's eye so that it looks purely at the subject.

NS Will you ever do anything else photographically? TW No, this is it for me. Wildlife photography is what I do; I love it and I'm in for the long haul. I live and breathe it.

Above Last Man Standing. Opposite View to a Kill.

Tom's top tips

One thing I never go on a shoot without is... a goal. I always have a specific image that I am working towards. But you have to be open to change.

My one piece of advice would be to... learn to critique your work objectively. Detach yourself from your imagery; look at it with a fresh pair of eyes.

Something I try to avoid is... holding on to work that's a 'near miss'. If I had a gallery of my near misses, it would take a few days to walk around.

Tom's critical moments

To see more of Tom's work, visit tomwayphotography.co.uk

2010 Got first camera: a Canon EOS 450D. 2012 Turned professional. Sold first fine art print.

2013 Won first competition (Marwell Zoo Photographer of the Year). 2014 Running workshops and safaris, talks and lectures. 2015/2016 Placed in European Wildlife Photographer of the Year Awards.

2017 Assignments and projects planned, based mainly in Kenya and Zambia.

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NATURE ZONE

DISCOVER

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LET BATTLE COMMENCE

Laurie Campbell has tips for photographing black grouse displaying



Life in the Wild

Alongside his photography of wildlife in its natural habitat, Laurie Campbell has recently become photographer-in-residence for the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland. He gives us an insight into his new role and reveals how it is enabling him to support the valuable work the society undertakes

Several months ago I revealed on social media that I'd been invited to be photographer-inresidence for the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (RZSS). I was honoured to accept because of my long association with the organisation, going back to when I left school and took a job as an animal keeper at Edinburgh Zoo. An early influence on my career decision was the book *Beasts in my Belfry* by the late Gerald Durrell, which I received as a gift from a great aunt one Christmas. The more I read of this man's work, the more convinced I became about wanting to become a zoo keeper and perhaps contribute to the conservation of species.

I had also been interested in photography for several years, so it seemed natural to want to photograph the animals at the zoo in my free time; I was soon developing and making my own black & white prints shot on Ilford FP4 film, which I'd hand-rolled into cassettes from a 30-metre bulk roll to keep costs down. Selling



Opposite I spent a day watching these ring-tailed lemurs, waiting for them to group together. This was the image that I later printed and framed as a gift for Lee Durrell.

Nikon D7100 with Nikon 70-200mm f/2.8 VR lens at 170mm. ISO 400. 1/250sec at f/5, handheld

Opposite (bottom) The scorro dove is extinct in the wild; its only chance of survival is captive breeding. Nikon D4 with Nikon 200-400mm f/4 VR lens at 200mm, ISO 1000, 1/100sec at f/4, handheld

Below (left) With a huge paddock to roam, these zebra took shelter from the exceptionally windy conditions and gathered close to a barrier, enabling me to shoot this composition.

Nikon D4 with Nikon 200-400mm f/4 VR lens at 400mm, ISO 1000, 1/160sec at f/6.3, beanbag resting on barrier

Below (right) This portrait of a polar bear emerging from a pond was the image that made it on to the front cover of an annual review for the RZSS.

Nikon D4 with Nikon 200-400mm f/4 VR lens at 250mm, ISO 800, 1/1250sec at f/7.1, handheld

Iox8in monochrome prints for Io pence each to colleagues and visitors was arguably my first foray into the world of commercial photography, and the images were certainly a welcome addition to the portfolio of work I presented at an interview for a university degree placement for photography a couple of years later.

So, although I valued my time working at the zoo, photography took over and I gradually lost touch, visiting sporadically and usually on family days out. Returning in my capacity as photographer-in-residence, exactly 40 years later, has been a slightly surreal experience. An awful lot has changed, but the need for photography is as important as ever.

This time last year I agreed to spend a few days at the society's base in the Scottish Highlands, the Highland Wildlife Park at Kincraig, just south of Aviemore. My mission

Zoological education, research and conservation

- » My experience of photographing the polar bear is far removed from working with these animals in the wild, in locations such as Svalbard. The advantage I had, of course, is that I was able to photograph the animal safely and at very close range not something that could be easily achieved in the wild. Of course I'm not saying that the image comes close to resembling a polar bear in a truly natural setting, but from a visitor experience point of view, zoos provide opportunities to see animals closer than they may ever do in the wild. For many, and particularly children, these encounters can leave a lasting impression and it must help many people become more interested in nature.
- » Education plays a big part in what many zoos do. The effect of this only really hit home when I was invited to take part in a 'Zoo Night' experience last April, where my role was to show children how to take close-up nature photographs. For practical purposes, I used inanimate specimens from the education centre. Some of the objects seemed a bit obscure and I thought I might need to explain what they were. I needn't have worried, as many of the children knew exactly what an elephant's molar looked like, or what species of pheasant the beautiful tail feather came from. With well over 1,000 parents and children attending the event, it's difficult to think of any other single event in the UK where people go out of their way to learn more about animal life.
- » Another side to zoos is that there is usually a lot more going on behind the scenes than most people realise. The RZSS, for example, is part of a large network of zoos that are pooling resources and collaborating on research and captive breeding programmes for endangered species. Part of this includes providing support for overseas conservation projects, often for little-known species that are unlikely to make the headlines. Closer to home, the RZSS is conducting research on species such a pine hoverflies, and is a major partner in two conservation projects: the Scottish Wildcat recovery project and the initiative to reintroduce European beavers to the UK.

was to shoot a picture of one of the polar bears for the front cover of an annual review, to highlight a captive breeding programme for the species. The climate and habitat of the location, together with the large (10 hectare) enclosures, ensures that the bears are comfortable and that photographing them would be straightforward. Well, this wasn't exactly the case because, for obvious safety reasons, I could only really work in close proximity to the animals when accompanied by one of the keepers while they were doing their rounds; this was when some of the most interesting behaviour occurred, because the activities of the keepers attracted the attention of the bears. It still took three sessions for it

all to come together, however, as I had to learn to anticipate the bears' responses and plan the image I wanted. My solution was to get the keeper to stand behind me as I lay on the ground, poking my lens between a gap in the wire while being careful to avoid contact with the electric fence.

Another contribution I make to the society is to supply prints of appropriate subjects as gifts for visiting 'Tribal Elders' – high-profile conservationists who are invited two or three times a year to present a lecture. Jane Goodall was the first, but imagine my delight to have prepared a print of ring-tailed lemurs for Lee Durrell, the wife of the writer who so inspired me all those years ago.





WHAT TO SHOOT THIS MONTH ...

Laurie's April highlights





Red campion (Silene dioica) is a common species throughout the UK that flowers from March to November and, as such, it is the ideal subject on which to practise a bit of botanical photography. With so many individual plants to choose from, begin by selecting the most perfect specimen, not just paying attention to the flowers but considering lighting and background too. If possible, locate one against a dark background, because this will emphasise the hairy stems that are such an important characteristic of the plant. The narrow angle of view of a long macro lens, or a close focusing telephoto zoom, will help to isolate it even more. Nikon F4S with Nikon 200mm f/4 macro lens, Fuji Velvia ISO 50, 1/30sec at f/11, mirror-lock, cable release, tripod

▲ Looking at posts on social media, I am seeing more and more photographs of male **black grouse** (*Tetrao tetrix*) displaying in spring. The majority of images will have been shot from dedicated hides set up by landowners and photographers, and positioned overlooking small patches of ground known as leks; these display sites are an important part of the birds breeding cycle. For anyone unsure about setting up hides for themselves, these managed ones offer a disturbance-free solution.

Nikon D4 with Nikon 500mm f/4 VR lens with Nikon 1.4x teleconverter, ISO 500, 1/800sec at f/6.3, beanbag, car hide



▲ Lapwing (Vanellus vanellus) is a species that is, sadly, in sharp decline. They can be very wary and are easily disturbed, so it's best to leave them well alone when they are settled on a nest. Much more interesting is to try photographing their flamboyant courtship behaviour when they are in the air or, once the male has the attention of a female, on the ground. They can be photographed using a car as a hide, parked safely on the verge of a quiet country road in prime breeding habitat such as damp upland grassland and sensitively managed farmland. Nikon D4 with Nikon 500mm f/4 VR lens, ISO 640, 1/2500sec at f/8, beanbag, car as hide



▲ Orange-tip butterflies (Anthocharis caradamines) are one of the first species on the wing, appearing earlier the further south you live. The beautiful patterns of the underwings can be photographed when the insects are inactive and resting on plants in cool conditions. To photograph the large orange patches that give the species its name, though, it's necessary to wait for warmer days, when they are more active and the wings are open. Trying to use a tripod for precision, low ISO settings and long exposures may only result in frustration, and this is where an image stabilising macro lens really comes into its own.

Nikon D300 with Nikon 200mm f/4 macro lens, ISO 200, 1/125sec at f/16, monopod

More seasonal subjects...

Flora

Black spleenwort (Asplenium adiantum nigrum) – despite its name, this is an attractive small fern that is commonly found growing between rocks.

Marram grass (Ammophila arenaria) – familiar to most who visit the coast, but infrequently photographed.

Silver birch (Betula pendula) – the fresh lime-green appearance of the leaves of this tree, which occurs when the buds burst, only lasts for a week or so.

Fauna

Collared dove (Streptopelia decaocto) – an attractive species, common and confiding, and with an interesting courtship display.

Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) – these summer migrants can turn up on just about any wetland to feed while on passage to their breeding grounds in the Highlands. **European beaver** (*Castor fiber*) – this is possibly the best time of year to photograph these animals before they become more difficult to see through the summer growth



World wildlife spectacles

Whale sharks, Australia

of marginal vegetation.

Ningaloo Reef, a World Heritage-listed fringing reef system off Western Australia's mid-north coast, is a dream destination for snorkellers and divers. Rich in biodiversity, it has over 200 varieties of coral and some 500 species of fish, turtles and manta rays. The waters just beyond the reef offer excellent opportunities to swim with whale sharks – these gentle giants are regular visitors between March and late July.

Bengal tigers, India/Bangladesh

Shared between India and Bangladesh, the Sundarbans are the only mangrove forests that are home to tigers; approximately 500 Bengal tigers live among the dense



tangle of roots and branches. The best way to explore the swampy wilderness is via the network of waterways; boats depart from the Bangladesh town of Khulna to take you on a three to four-day adventure. The tigers are extremely hard to spot, but you are likely to see monkeys, wild boar, spotted deer, crocodiles and a rich array of birdlife.



Eight great places to hear the dawn chorus

Some natural phenomena are worth getting up early for, and, in spring, the dawn chorus is one of them. In certain locations – especially deciduous woodland – it's not unusual to hear 20 different species of birds as they compete to establish territories and attract a mate. Here are some places worth heading to in time for sunrise...

Prior's Wood, Somerset From late April you can

experience a cacophony of birdsong among swathes of bluebells in this wildlife-rich wood near Bristol. Listen out for song thrushes, robins, blackbirds, warblers and chiffchaffs. avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/reserves/priors-wood

Barkbooth Lot, Cumbria Located near Kendal, this spectacular bluebell woodland is home to many bird species, including mistle thrush, redstart, treecreeper, redpoll, chiffchaff, pied flycatcher, greater spotted and green woodpecker. golakes.co.uk

Wood of Cree, Dumfries and Galloway

The air is filled with birdsong in spring, with a mix of African migrants and woodland birds such as pied flycatchers, redstarts, willow tits and wood warblers. It's also great for spring flowers. rspb.org.uk/woodofcree

Minsmere, Suffolk

This famous coastal nature reserve is a magical place to enjoy the dawn chorus; nightingales and warblers sing beautifully in the woods, while the calls of bitterns can be heard in the reedbeds. rspb.org.uk/minsmere

Portmore Lough, County Antrim

Reed buntings and various warblers declare territory from the edges of the lake, while skylarks and meadow pipits sing overhead. Also look for displaying lapwing in the meadows, rspb.org.uk/portmorelough

Fingringhoe Wick, Essex With an abundance of flowers and insects, the reserve attracts many migrant birds in spring and summer. The star attraction is the nightingale; around 30 pairs nest close together, singing as one. essexwt.org.uk/reserves/fingringhoe-wick

Slindon Estate, West Sussex Join National Trust rangers for an early morning walk to hear a variety of songbirds and warblers, from treecreepers, nuthatches, chiffchaffs, blackcaps and whitethroats, to farmland species such as linnets and skylarks. nationaltrust.org.uk/slindon-estate

North Cliffe Wood, East Yorkshire

This lovely woodland nature reserve is awash with colourful flowers in spring, when birdsong is at its peak. Treecreepers, great spotted and green woodpeckers are among the resident species.

ywt.org.uk/reserves/north-cliffe-wood-nature-reserve



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At home in the oakwoods

Patience, planning and persistence pay off for **James Warwick** and he finally gets the images of badgers he hoped for in a wooded valley close to where he lives in Ashdown Forest

A few summers ago I spent many evenings watching and photographing badgers at a sett in a secluded oakwood valley close to where I live in Ashdown Forest, East Sussex. While it was a fulfilling experience, the amount of time that needs to be committed to such a project for it to be successful should not be underestimated. It was the first time I had attempted to photograph badgers, so there was a lot to learn about their habits and also the techniques I would need to employ to produce good pictures.

Firstly, I needed to find a way of helping the badgers to accept my presence and the introduction of the photographic equipment – which would need to be very close to them to achieve the intimate wideangle shots I was aiming for. So, I began placing a small number of mini dog biscuits (sparingly so not to provide more than a tiny snack) under the surrounding leaves an hour or so before twilight. I was hoping to tempt the badgers out of the dense

bracken around their sett and into slightly more open areas. After a few weeks, two cubs of around three to four months old began appearing. They promptly found the biscuits and then left to start their nightly forage. I watched them from behind some bracken a good distance away. I tried to stay downwind of them, but eventually concluded that they were well aware of me and didn't mind my presence as long as I didn't get too close.

I then introduced my camera, resting it on a beanbag for a low-angle view, and synced it wirelessly to two flashguns mounted on small stands. To begin with, and unsurprisingly, the cubs were startled by the flash and made a speedy departure. However, they very quickly learnt not to worry and I was able to take several pictures each evening rather than just one. I triggered the camera from a distance with a remote control, and experimented with the flash output levels and their positions relative to

the camera to ensure good detail was captured without overpowering what was effectively a night-time scene. I was able to pre-compose a different picture each evening, as a well-placed biscuit would inevitably bring a keen-nosed badger cub towards the camera.

As well as the secretive badgers, the oakwood had other surprises in store for me too. Fallow deer would often walk close by without realising I was there, and one evening a barn owl peered at me from a nearby oak tree. On several occasions I had the surreal experience of being able to hear nightjars churring on the heathland behind me at the same time as the sound of gunfire emanated from an adjacent army training area, sometimes with one of their pink flares lighting up the sett.

Badgers in the bracken.

Nikon D800 with 24-70mm lens at 24mm, ISO 800, 1/60sec at f/22, SB-910 speedlights with diffusers

On the wing

Welcoming the arrival of spring, Steve Young spends the day at a local nature reserve, where he finds an abundance of busy birds gearing up for the breeding season and makes the most of an opportunity to photograph (from a distance) a visiting smew

Right Whitethroat (male): A sure sign that spring has arrived, whitethroats are always nice to see and photograph.

Below left Linnet (female): A linnet collecting material for her nest, which was just a few yards from the public footpaths that meander round the reserve.

Below right Smew: One of the best-looking of our winter duck visitors, this male smew at Lunt Meadows drew very little interest compared to the short-eared owls that were present during winter. The smew was too distant for really good shots; this image has been cropped by about 50%.

In early spring last year I made a return trip to one of my local nature reserves, Lunt Meadows in north Merseyside. My last visit to the site was in late January to photograph short-eared owls – they turned out to be a very popular attraction, drawing in large crowds (see OP214). With the passing of winter I was hoping for a pleasant day photographing some of the newly arrived migrants and local breeding birds that occur at the site.

A male smew had also been reported at the reserve. One of the smarter looking ducks, this species is a regular winter visitor to the UK; most have left by this time of year, but this individual had decided to drop in for a few days before heading back to Europe to breed. With its black and white plumage, complete with bandit-style black eye patch, it is certainly an attractive duck and I was hoping for some nice views and images.

I was quite amazed to find that the car park, which had been jam-packed only a month ago with owl photographers, was virtually empty today, despite the presence of the attractive and scarce smew. My luck was both in and out with the duck, because although it was still at the site, it was too far away on the pool for any really decent images. But, with no expense incurred for taking distant



record shots, I took some anyway!

As I continued wandering round the reserve, I stumbled across a breeding pair of linnets collecting nest material. When I say the pair was collecting, it was actually the female doing all the work while the male sat nearby, observing what was going on and occasionally singing. My next encounter was with a newly arrived sedge warbler that was hidden away in a reed bed with bushes; it was the perfect habitat, and one that would no doubt bring him breeding success when he found a mate over the next week or so. His chattering song could be heard across a wide area so, despite not being able to see him, I knew he was there - and so would any females that arrived.

The final sign that spring had arrived (and that it really was time for that smew to make a migratory move) was a singing

whitethroat close to the track on the other side of the reserve. This scratchy songster likes to announce its presence from a raised perch, usually a bush or tree, and this one was no different, singing loudly from a small shrub before dropping down lower, allowing me to capture a few quick shots before it made its way back into cover.

A buzzard, kestrel and a distant drake goosander added to my day count of birds. As I walked away from the hive of spring activity and back to my car, I thought about how glad I am that I decided, nearly 25 years ago, to take redundancy from my job as a branch manager with Post Office Counters. I'll never be rich, but at least my job satisfaction has kept me going through the years. On days like this it is great; on the bad days, with no pictures taken, you just look forward to a better one!



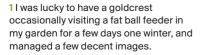


STEVE'S APRIL HIGHLIGHTS

BIRD OF THE MONTH

Goldcrest is our smallest breeding species. Fast-moving and full of nervous energy, these birds can be very difficult to photograph successfully; their small size and fast-flicking action means they don't lend themselves to an easy snapshot!

Luckily they are also extremely vocal, calling a lot of the time, so their presence is usually quite obvious and widely announced. With a gold crest, green back, off-white underparts and a gentle expression, they are attractive birds and it's worth putting in some time and effort to photograph them.



2 Birds will occasionally sing when on migration, as this bird did one autumn.





BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY TIP





With species such as goldcrest, which flit and move very quickly through trees and bushes, it is worth remembering that it is nearly always best to use the fastest shutter speed possible, rather than a mix of a slower shutter and smaller apertures for the best exposure.

Even with today's stabilising lens and camera systems it is better to shoot at 1/1000th of a second at f/5.6, rather than 1/250th of a second at f/11, so try not to use the Programme mode; this will give what it thinks is the correct exposure, but it won't know that you want the fastest shutter speed.

Today's cameras are clever, sophisticated mini-computers, but they don't know that you are trying to photograph a fast-flying or fast-moving bird. Unless you are trying for a particular special effect (for example, flowing water surrounding a static species such as a hunting grey heron), I would recommend a fast shutter every time.

1 Eider on nest: There are times when you don't need a fast shutter speed, and this female eider on her nest, photographed in Iceland, is a perfect example.

2 Common swift: Nine times out of 10, a fast shutter speed is best for bird photography, especially when your subject moves as quickly through the air as a common swift.

LOCATION OF THE MONTH





Isle of Skye, Inner Hebrides

Islands are bursting with life in spring, making this a great time to explore some of the UK's more remote locations. And for wildlife watching and photography, the Isle of Skye is hard to beat. The largest of the Inner Hebrides, the island is famous for its outstanding landscapes, with a stunning coastline, scenic lochs and spectacular mountains.

Red deer, otters, whales, dolphins and seals are just some of the animals that can be seen on and around Skye, and the variety of birds found here is exceptional. The white-tailed sea eagle, the UK's largest raptor, is at the top of many visiting birdwatchers' lists; the cliffs around the island (especially those near Portree) are widely considered the best place to see them in the wild.

The south of the island is dominated by the dramatic Cuillin Hills, where it is quite possible to sit with golden eagles and ptarmigan, with views of Manx shearwaters on Loch Scavaig far below.

Location The Isle of Skye is situated off the west coast of mainland Scotland; the nearest mainland settlements are Kyle of Lochalsh and Mallaig.

Getting there Travel by car ferry from Mallaig or take the road bridge from Kyle of Lochalsh.

Website isleofskye.com

Smartphone cameras and matrimonial woes...

You wouldn't try to make a phone call from your top-of-the-range camera, so why should people think that you could take professional photographs with a smartphone? It's a ridiculous idea that could end up spoiling a perfectly good wedding. By **Nick Smith**

A few years ago I was sent on assignment to New York to interview Buzz Aldrin and, as if that weren't thrilling enough, the magazine responsible for the commission had booked me into business class for the transatlantic flight. As such largesse is practically unheard of in the world of publishing I assumed that a logistical mistake of some sort had been made, and said so to the woman checking me on to the flight. Subsequent to her reassuring me that there had indeed been no clerical error and that I should mentally prepare myself for 'turning left' upon boarding the plane, the expression 'yabba dabba doo' spontaneously leapt to mind, much as in the way the noble salmon leapeth in the waterfalls of the Scottish glen.

The first and cardinal rule of flying long haul is this: never, ever, under any circumstances, engage in casual conversation with the stranger sitting next to you. And yet the woman to my left seemed pleasant enough for me to lower my guard and, as we quaffed pre-takeoff champagne, I started to wonder if my dictum might be just a tad draconian. No such luck. I was right in the first place: the hours that followed seemed like days as Frangelica droned on about her forthcoming wedding to some poor unfortunate wraith, who seemed destined for a life of enduring prolonged monologues on subjects too trivial to even contemplate. As with Coleridge's *Ancyent Marinere*, she showed no mercy, verbally pinning me to the porthole as she soliloquised on her prospective matrimonial ceremony without hesitation, repetition or deviation.

What has this to do with photography, I hear you ask, and it is indeed a good question. My travelling companion, having reached the point where she was starting to bore herself, wondered aloud (out of politeness more than any genuine desire to find out the answer) what I did for a living. And here comes the second cardinal rule of the long haul flight, which is never to tell a stranger the truth about what you do for a living. As I watched the word 'photographer' float through the ether towards her, I knew I'd sentenced myself to further torture.

It is a very dark cloud indeed that bears no silver lining, and as my fellow jet-setter and I exchanged views on wedding photography, I started to realise that I'd judged too harshly a perfectly charming woman whose only crime was to be voluble on what was, after all, one of the biggest days of her life. Furthermore, she didn't want to make the mistake that her friends Charlotte and Tarquin had made when it came to their wedding photos. Turns out that Lottie and Tarks had decided not to employ a professional

snapper to capture their nuptials, being of the opinion that their guests, all of whom were in possession of the swankiest of smartphones, could record for posterity the whole bang-shoot in an orgy of what we now have come to think of as 'citizen photography'.

'Was it a complete disaster?' I inquired with as much insouciance as I could muster under the circumstances. Totally, quoth she, before telling me that it had all started off swimmingly well, and that the day had been a day to remember, and everybody had shared their pictures on picture sharing social media platforms, and everything had 'looked okay' on the screen. Of course, the true scale of the disaster didn't begin to emerge until the newly-weds decided that they wanted hard copies of the photographs, and started to encounter quality assurance issues related to resolution, sharpness, file size and so on. But the real stinker was that the photos were basically rubbish. For two reasons: first, they were taken by people who weren't proper photographers, whose interest and ability in what they were doing declined in proportion to the quantity of alcohol consumed; while second, and here I need to quote my friend in full, 'the thing about cameras on phones is they're not very good at taking photos.' Add to that the fact that smartphones aren't very good at making audio phone calls either, and what you have on your hands is an expensive heap of electronic junk.

I use the last expression in a calculated manner because I think it's time someone stood up and said that the shopworn cliché of 'the backward march of progress' could have been invented for the digital world. I know there are a million reasons to be grateful to the inventors of the integrated circuit, and that to live during these early days of the digital revolution is to be present at one of the greatest moments of mankind since Apollo II delivered Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin to the moon. But even the most diehard of advocates for the smartphone will at some point have to admit that, when it comes to serious photography, they are of no more use than a trinket from a Christmas cracker.

Of course, it is a wonderful thing to be able to review our images on a screen while we are working, and it is a wonder beyond all wonders not to be forever changing film, paying for development and waiting for processing. But we have to let common sense prevail sometimes, and I think that when my airborne friend, in all her loquacious innocence, told me that smartphones make for terrible cameras, she hit the nail right on the head.

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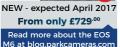
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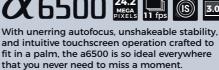
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columbiasportswear.co.uk



Coleman Kobuck Valley 3

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coleman.eu/uk

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msrgear.com

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With an expandable ISO of 819200 and a new APS-C-sized CMOS 24.32MP image sensor, this compact DSLR sure packs a punch and is great for nighttime shoots. Ideal for using in harsh weather conditions, the KP has 67 seals across its body, making it dust-proof and weather-resistant, and it performs in temperatures as low as -10°C. Its five-axis shake reduction system is also ideal for long-exposure photography.

Guide price £1,099.99 (body only)

ricoh-imaging.co.uk



Fujifilm X-T2

Arriving to great fanfare, the X-T2 promises to deliver creative perfection, but how does it stand up to its significant competitors in this sector? Fergus Kennedy finds out...

Guide price £1,399 Contact fujifilm.co.uk

The latest mirrorless offering from Fujifilm promises an update to the popular X-TI and boasts the same X-Trans sensor as their X-Pro 2. I was eager to see how the X-T2 compared.

Using the X-T2 down at the coast for some seascapes, I was impressed by the overall usability; it is easy to get on with. Finding a shot that was too wide for the lens I had on it, I switched the camera to portrait orientation and shot a quick handheld panorama. The in-camera stitching worked a treat and the colour rendition and detail were as pleasing as they had been in the X-Pro 2.

Ergonomically, the X-T2 is an evolution of the X-T1. Its looks have a traditional, slightly retro appeal, and almost all the settings you would wish to adjust are accessible via physical controls. The top plate provides three large dials: ISO, shutter speed and exposure compensation. The ISO dial has a secondary ring below it that is used to select shooting mode: single shot, continuous high speed, movie mode, panorama, and so on. Below the shutter speed dial you can select metering mode. Both these two main dials can be locked to prevent accidental shifting. In

below The rugged build and weatherproofed body made the for scrambling over the rocks on the Sussex coast. Fujifilm X-T2 with 18-55mm lens at 18mm, ISO 200, 1/320sec at f/8

X-T2 a good choice

addition, there is a thumb wheel on the back and a right index finger wheel.

FUJIFILM

20 MJ A 4-8-5:1 mm22

One thing that Fujifilm does slightly differently from most other manufacturers is that on some of their lenses, aperture is controlled via a ring on the lens. There is also a switch on the lens to flip between lens-based iris control and auto-aperture. On the subject of lenses, you select single shot autofocus, continuous autofocus or manual focus using a switch on the bottom right of the front of the camera body. Another nice touch is that you can change the function of the rear thumb wheel by pressing it. For instance, while it can normally be used to control shutter speed, one click activates expanded focus in the viewfinder or rear LCD, which can be further zoomed by rotating the wheel. I did find that there were times I would have liked the X-T2 to have a touchscreen. I can cope without it, but sometimes it's a better option for selecting autofocus points, particularly when shooting video.



Ergonomics; it feels great in the hands Excellent, feature-packed battery grip Snappy operation in both autofocus and fps Superb image quality in stills and 4K video Dual card slots for backup

DISLIKES

No touchscreen No in-body stabilisation





 $above\ (left)$ The X-T2 preserved good detail in shadows and highlights in this coastal cave image.

Fujifilm X-T2 with 18-55mm lens at 18mm, ISO 200, 1/400sec at f/8, stitched panorama from five portrait format shots

above (right) Regent Street, London, on a drizzly winter's evening. Although the X-T2 has no in-body image stabilisation, the lens image stabilisation proved pretty effective for handheld shots at moderately slow shutter speeds.

Fujifilm X-T2 with 18-55mm lens at 18mm, ISO 800, 1/15sec at f/2.8

SPECIFICATIONS

Sensor 24MP micro four thirds

Resolution 6,000 x 4,000 pixels

Lens Interchangeable Fujifilm X mount

Shutter speed 30sec to 1/8000sec, electronic shutter: up to 1/32000sec

ISO 200-12800 (100-51200 extended)

Viewfinder Electronic

LCD 3in articulated (3:2) 1.04M-dot

Flash Hotshoe

Movie mode Max UHD 4K up to 30fps

Card formats SD/SDHC/SDXC dual card slot

Power NP-W126S lithium-ion

Size 133 x 92 x 49mm

Weight 507g (with battery/no lens)



While the hybrid viewfinder on the X-Pro 2 was something of a Marmite feature (love it or hate it), the X-T2 has a more conventional electronic viewfinder I would describe the viewfinder resolution as adequate rather than class-leading, but personally I prefer it to the hybrid finder of its close cousin. The autofocus speed and accuracy both showed a noticeable improvement over either of its predecessors and were up to tracking continuously moving subjects when I took it out for some street photography. The X-T2 is also capable of a blistering 14fps continuous shooting, with a power-boost from the battery grip.

Talking of the grip, I seldom feel the need to extol the virtues of what is normally a fairly mundane accessory, but I'll make an exception for the X-T2 grip. It is quite simply wonderful. Firstly and most obviously it provides space for two extra batteries in addition to the one in the camera, giving a total of three. The battery levels are displayed individually as three separate battery symbols in the display and they are exhausted sequentially, so it's easy to keep track of battery life. Battery life is frequently the Achilles heel of mirrorless cameras, so this grip is highly recommended for anyone using the camera on anything more than a casual basis. The grip also has a charging port on it, so you can charge the batteries in the grip without removing the grip or the batteries. You can even simultaneously charge the battery in the body, with an additional USB lead. The grip has a headphone socket on it for videographers, who will also be pleased to hear the battery grip

extends your maximum recording time from 10 minutes of 4K to 30 minutes. For stills shooting, the grip allowed all-day shooting without any battery changes.

Heading out for an evening of street shooting in low light, I explored the high ISO performance of the X-T2. Although perhaps not quite at the top of its class, I found the camera provided pretty clean results up to ISO 6400. Although it lacks the in-body image stabilisation that seems to be creeping into many newer mirrorless offerings, I found the in-lens image stabilisation on the kit lens to be very effective. Shooting at around 1/10th second, I was getting pin-sharp shots handheld. Fujifilm now has an excellent range of both zoom and prime lenses, although it's mainly the zoom lenses that boast optical image stabilisation.

VERDICT

The Fujifilm X-T2 feels like a high quality, well thought out product. The grip is a genuinely useful addition that will be indispensible for many users. The camera is responsive and fast and the image quality is excellent. This is a genuine contender among today's excellent crop of mirrorless cameras.

RATINGS

Handling Performance Specification Value

96% 97% 97% 95%





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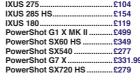


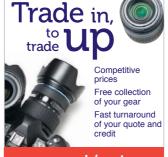
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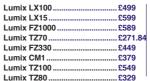
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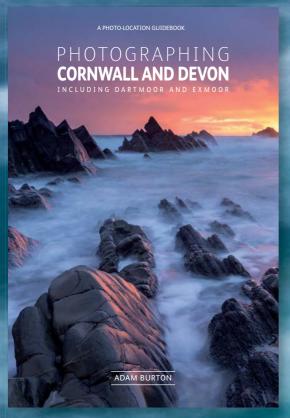
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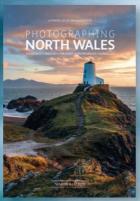


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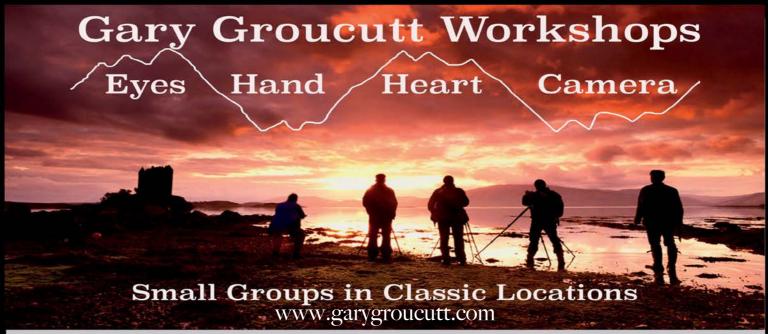
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The recent Northumberland workshop, exceeded my wildest expectations. I learnt more in the four days with you than I had in all the previous workshops combined. Your relaxed style and willingness to explain your own method of working was a revelation. Even more so was the considerable time you spent with each participant improving their own technique and knowledge. - Keith Weil April 2015

Workshop Highlights for 2017



Assynt Winter 2016

Please see website for full list

MARCH

Lake District Masterclass 10th - 12th (1 Place) £475 inc DBB

APRIL

Harris and Lewis 7 Nights £1495 inc DBB

MAY

Ullapool, Suilven 11th - 16th (1 Place) £895 inc DBB



JULY

Copenhagen Street and Architecture 1st - 5th (2 Places) £1295 inc DBB

SEPTEMBER

Yorkshire Dales and Coast 1st - 6th (1 Place) £895 inc DBB

Harris & Lewis 9th - 16th (1 Place) £1495 inc DBB

OCTOBER

Glencoe & Rannoch 13th - 16th £695 inc DBB

NOVEMBER

Northumberland Coast 13th - 16th (1 Place) £545 inc DBB

DECEMBER

Isle of Skye 7th - 12th (1 Place) £895

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April 2nd - 5th



The Essence of Tuscany
May 21st - 27th



Waterfalls and Seascapes
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Golden Eagle Experience in Leicestershire 2017 Dates

May 21st; Golden Eagle will fly, and perch in carefully chosen natural settings. Jesses hidden for static shots. Controlled flying. Also selection from; Owls, Buzzard, Hawks, Goshawk Max. 8 photographers. Cheetahs, Lions, Foxes, Birds of Prey, Cambs.

May 20th; Privileged access to Cheetahs, Malayan Tigers, White Tiger & Corsac Foxes. The Cheetah & Tiger

enclosures are not mowed for enhanced photographic opportunities. Private Displays by various Birds of Prey, both static & flying. Jesses hidden for static shots. Barn Owl, Eagle Owl and Red-Tailed Hawk etc. Amazing Bat Photos & Learn Fill-in Flash Techniques

April 6th; Oxfordshire. Take amazing bat photos, plus learn how to use balanced fill-in flash on wildlife subjects in different lighting conditions. Max 4 persons. Free loan of Canon digital camera and flash if req'd. Big Cats at WHF, Smarden in Kent

April 29th, May 13th; Up close to African Lions, Bengal + Siberian + Sumatran Tigers, Servals, Cheetahs, Pumas, Jungle Cat, Amur & Snow Leopards, Caracal, Lynx, Clouded Leopards, Fishing Cat. Large open photographer-friendly enclosures. UK's most popular photo workshop. Really special photo opportunities from just inches away. White Lion pride in a huge natural enclosure. Max 12 clients.

Big Cats at WHF, Smarden, Kent - Specialist event 6 photographers - incl. Jaguars £199 May 11th,14th, 26th; Full day as above, but with additional space at each enclosure. Time is also put aside to review your photos at lunchtime. One to one tuition throughout this very special day. You wil see all the animals as above and you will have more personal interaction with the cats. Now including Jaguars.

Gift Vouchers available for any Workshop or for any Monetary Value.

These Experiences make Wonderful Gifts for that Special Occasion. Birds of Prey Workshop, Bedford

April 15th, 16th; Private flying displays on pre-determined flightpath helps you to focus on birds in flight. Excellent opportunities with carefully chosen backgrounds. Also static shots in outstanding natural locations. Jesses carefully hidden. This location boasts one of the largest collections of Birds of Prey in the UK. White Jesses carefully hidden. This location poasts one of the largest conscious tailed Sea Eagle, Bald Eagles, Hawks, Owls, Falcons, Kestrels, Buzzards and Long Eared Owl (new). Foxes, Otters, Wildcats, Badgers & more, Surrey.

July 11, 12th; Inside enclosures 'til sunset. Also Owls, Snakes, Badgers, Polecats, Weasels, Stoats, Hedgehog, Harvest Mice & various Deer. 2 sessions with the foxes, sometimes only inches away from you. inside encloses with Foxes, Otters, Scottish Wildcats. Badgers GUARANTEED. No fences or wires to shoot through. Small Cats Workshop, Welwyn, Herts.

April 24th; Privileged access to Snow Leopards, Amur Leopards, Pumas, Caracal, Leopard Cat, Lynx, Servals, Golden Cat, Jaguarundi, Cheetahs, Asian Wildcat. As featured on Animal Planet. Small groups.

June 9th, June 18th, June 25th; Private boat. Exclusive use of island for just 10 photographers. 50,000 pairs of nesting gannets on one small island. 4.5 hours photography. Amazing close-ups & fantastic flight shots. Large crate of fish fed to gannets as they dive into the sea. An amazing sight that you will never forget. Gannets diving off Bass Rock

June 14th; Fantastic new workshop. We sail round Bass Rock without landing on the island. A whole hour of throwing fish into the sea for the Gannets to catch. Amazing diving shots. 1,000 + dives. Tips & Tuition. Farne Islands Puffins (Over 5 hrs photography)

June 10th, 17th, 24th; 20 species of birds. 50,000 puffins. Guillemots, Razorbills, Shag, Arctic Tern colony etc. You will get unbelievably close to some of the species. Get that much sought after shot of Puffins with their beaks crammed full of sand eels. Tips and Tuition. Approximately 5 hours photography.

Pro Birds of Prey Shoot (2) with Short Eared Owl, Northumberland. June 13th, 16th; Both the falconer and the birds are different to workshop above. Venues are about 20 miles apart. We will take two of the birds down to an amazingly beautiful, little known waterfall. This will provide a unique backdrop for your subjects. The falls are surrounded by trees covered with mosses and lichens. We will photograph up to 10 different species of birds, mainly British. Maximum 8 photographers.

Small Mammals, Insects & Reptiles in BOTH RUTLAND & NORTHUMBERLAND Rutland March 15th. Northumberland July 27th, 28th; Indoor studio set-ups ensuring professional quality photos of stunning subjects. Studio lighting set up for you. Triggers to fit your camera supplied. Cameras and lenses can be loaned without charge. Innovative set-ups to maximise your opportunities. Max 4 persons. Harvest Mice, Red Eyed Tree Frogs, Praying Mantis, Beardeed Dragon, Scorpion, Tarantula, Snakes, Lizards etc. Birds of Prey on Lindisfarne (Holy Island) incl. Short Eared Owl

June 5th; New workshop for 2016. Photograph a Short Eared Owl in its natural habitat before continuing with selection from Eagle Owl, Long Eared Owl, Barn Owl, Buzzard, Kestrel, Little Owl, Tawny Owl using boats, Lindisfarne Castle, boat houses & fishing props as backdrops.

DESTINATIONS ABROAD 2017 & 2018

Masai Mara in Kenya - Birds & Mammals of Costa Rica - The Galapagos Isles White Horses in the Camargue - Falklands Tour - Tigers in India Animals in Snow in Montana - Brown Bears in Alaska - Jaguars in the Pantanal South Africa Wild Dogs and Reflection Pools - Botswana by Boat Alaska's Inside Passage - Namibia's Wildlife, Landscapes & the Himba Tribe





















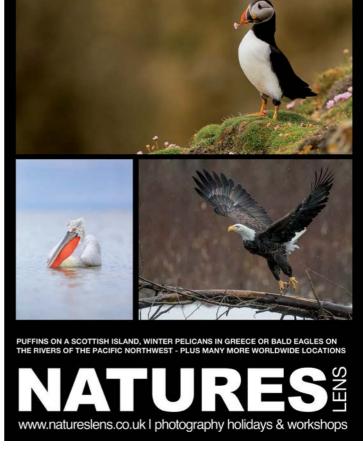




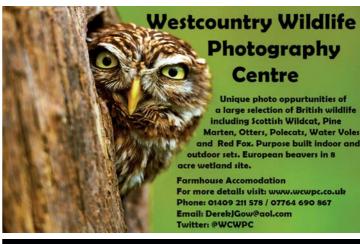
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If you only do one thing this month...

Cloudscapes

In our December issue we asked you to send us your most impressive cloudscape images, and you certainly produced a high number of stunning photographs. Here's our winner, who wins a set of Coleman BatteryLock lights, and 13 runners-up...



WINNER

Gary Swann

Opposite page A serene start to a Sunday morning as the sunrise burnt away the remains of a sea mist and cast a wonderful light on the clouds drifting across St Ives Bay, Cornwall.

Nikon D7000 with Nikon 16-85mm lens at 16mm, ISO 100, 1/15sec at f/11, tripod cygneturephotography.co.uk

Simon Swales

Right, top This image was taken in a field above Culross in western Fife, a few miles from home. It was an astonishing sky, with different layers of cloud for the setting sun to light up; the luminosity was incredible. The effect above the tree was an area of thin cloud that allowed the colour of the blue sky to show through. Canon EOS 5D MkII with Zeiss Distagon 21mm f/2.8 lens, ISO 100, 2sec at f/13, 0.6 ND soft grad, tripod

simonswalesphotography.co.uk

Claire Carter

Right, middle I took this image near Selfoss in southern Iceland, looking over the Ölfusá River. I was primarily looking for wildlife at a nature reserve when I saw this snowstorm develop over the distant hills. It slowly drifted along, leaving everything white in its wake. Watching it from afar was quite a sight.

Canon EOS 5D MkII with Canon 16-35mm f/2.8 L lens at 17mm, ISO 200, 1/16osec at f/9, Lee ND grad carterart.co.uk

Stuart Scott

Right, bottom In late May, while photographing Dartmoor tors from Harrowbeer Down above Horrabridge in Devon, a powerful Atlantic storm approached from the south-west. It presented a bold, monumental juxtaposition of convoluted dark and light clouds with foreboding, wind-driven curtains of rain sweeping along its base. It was a terrifyingly sublime cloudscape over a quiet, pastoral landscape in the foreground.

Nikon D600 with Nikkor 70-200mm f/2.8 lens

at 175mm, ISO 50, 1/40sec at f/8, tripod









Ric Harding

Above Windy Point is an exposed area in the Snake River valley of the Grand Teton National Park, USA. The light was constantly changing so I waited until the moment when the rainbow silhouetted one of the few trees in the area.

Nikon D800 with 24-70mm lens at 70mm, ISO 640, I/400sec at f/10, tripod

Denis Feiner

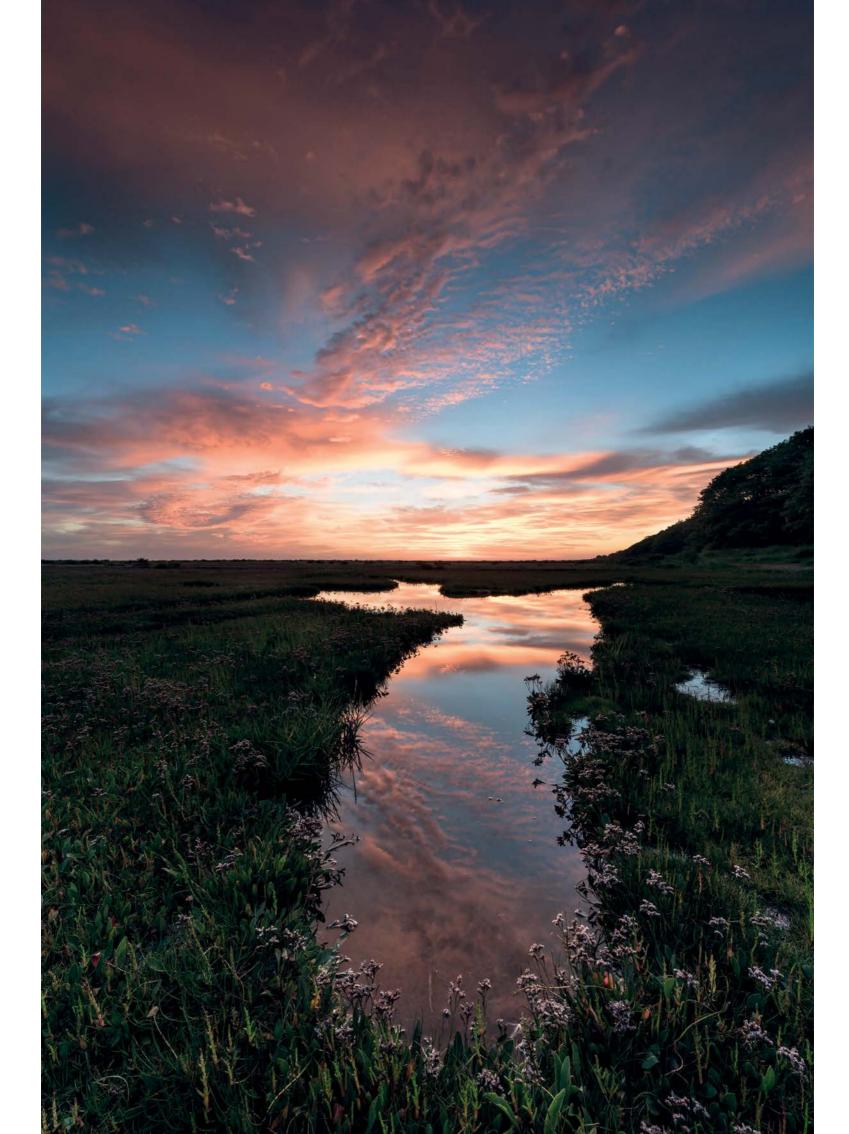
Right The image was taken from the cockpit of a plane after take off from Düsseldorf airport in Germany. The clouds from the power plant cooling towers pierced the morning fog.

Nikon D800E with Nikon 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6 VR lens at 56mm, ISO 100, 1/640sec at f/8, handheld denisfeiner.com

Martin Tosh

Opposite page This was taken at Stiffkey on the north Norfolk coast. I loved the way the colour caught the clouds and was reflected in the pool. Nikon D750 with 14-24mm f/2.8 lens at 15mm, ISO 100, 0.8sec at f/14, tripod photography-by-tosh.com











Dylan Nardini

Opposite page This was taken in April last year on the way down Great Mell Fell in the Lake District during my first visit to the area. The sky was almost crystal clear, which was pleasant to walk in but not the conditions I would usually choose for photography. This tilting hawthorn, shaped by the prevailing winds, grabbed my attention and, conveniently, a lone, passing wispy cloud seemed to mirror its form. I shot in infrared for the high contrast and dark sky it produced, which helped highlight the shape of the cloud and tree.

Nikon D80 (IR converted 720nm) with Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8 lens at 32mm, ISO 125, 1/125sec at f/8, polariser, handheld, converted to monochrome in Silver Efex dylannardini.com

Mark Helliwell

Left, top This cloud formation above the piers at Whitby in North Yorkshire took me by surprise, as I was originally set up to take pictures of the town, to the left. I tried a number of compositions but settled on portrait format to emphasise the interest in the sky. I also tried longer exposures, but felt this image portrayed more drama.

Nikon D810 with Nikkor 16-35mm lens at 35mm, ISO 64, 1.3sec at f/II, 2-stop ND hard grad, 3-stop ND, tripod markhelliwell.com

David Shawe

Left, bottom On a trip to the Applecross peninsula, I'd watched this unusual cloud formation building up all day over Raasay and the Cuillins of Skye, but by late afternoon occasional shafts of light started to emerge between the layers to give this subtle effect. Although it remained mainly overcast, the landscape was bathed in a warm glow. Canon EOS 5D MkIII with Canon EF 24-105mm f/4 L lens at 65mm, ISO 100, 1/100sec at f/11, Lee 0.6 ND hard grad davidshawephotography.com







Mat Robinson

Left, top I was driving back to York when, near Tadcaster, the setting sun cast a golden glow on this mammatus cloud. I just had to pull over and get a shot.

Canon EOS 5D MkII with 17-40mm lens at 17mm, ISO 200, 1/160sec at f/13, handheld matrobinsonphoto.co.uk

Richard Jones

Left, middle I was attracted to the way the vast expanse of Berrow beach, in Somerset, was offset at low tide by the textures of the huge storm clouds above. I loved how the shape and line of the cloud matched the line of debris at the high tide mark.

Nikon D810 with Nikkor 20mm f/1.8 G lens, ISO 64, 1/2sec at f/11, tripod richjjones.com

Kasia Nowak

Left, bottom This was taken in Shark Bay in Western Australia during an evening visit to the Francois Peron National Park. The sky was almost completely clear except for a lonely cloud painted red by the setting sun. I chose a minimalist approach to the composition to reflect the feeling of isolation.

Nikon D800 with 70-300mm VR lens at 82mm, ISO 100, 1/100sec at f/5.6, 81C filter, tripod kasianowak.com

Barry Prole

Opposite page Walking with my two dogs along the limestone escarpment above Llangollen in Denbighshire, north-east Wales, I could see that the cloud lying along the valley floor had started to rise and was highlighting a windswept hawthorn tree. While getting my camera sorted, a walker came into view and completed the scene. Fuji X-TI with 50-140mm lens at 130mm, ISO 200, 1/40sec at f/8, handheld, converted to monochrome with Silver Efex Pro



YOUR NEXT CHALLENGE

NEW ONLINE ENTRY SYSTEM!

Leading lines

To create strong photographs that take the viewer on a journey and tell a story, it is important to consider how the eye travels around a composition, and what elements affect this. One of the most powerful tools at our disposal for achieving this is the use of leading lines that guide the viewer through the image. There are often obvious parts of a scene that can serve as a leading line, such as a river or fence running through a landscape, but it doesn't have to be so overt. The lines created where light meets shadow can also work well. Whatever genre you shoot, we want to see your best creations that take us on a journey through the image.

Check out Richard Garvey-Williams' excellent article on page 28 about how you can use elements in your composition to draw attention to the most important subject. Then send us your best 'leading line' images for a chance to be published in our August issue. To submit your images, head to outdoorphotographymagazine.co.uk/submissions. Closing date for entries is 25 April 2017. See page 73 for full details.

Enter and you could win a superb Sprayway Mylas jacket, worth £140!

The winner of our 'leading lines' competition will not only see their image published in the August issue of OP, but will also receive a superb Mylas jacket from Sprayway. Ultra light, highly compressible and filled with waterresistant duck down, the Mylas is the ideal outer layer for excursions this season, or as a mid-layer on very cold days. Featuring a Lycra-bound hood and cuffs, plus a drawcord adjustable hem to keep the cold out, the jacket comes in four eyecatching colours. It's available in men's and women's sizes, and a Stuffsac is included. sprayway.com



Where in the world?

If you can tell us the name of this village on a remote island, pictured above, you could win a three-person Coleman Kobuck Valley 3 tent, worth £119!

NEW! ONLINE ENTRY

Where is it?

This tiny village lies alongside a lagoon on a remote island, where fishing and sheep farming have been the mainstays of the economy for centuries. But is it:

- a) Adamstown, Pitcairn Islands
- b) Saksun, Faroe Islands
- c) Blue Hill, Saint Helena

The answer and the winner's name will be revealed in OP219 (on sale 1 June 2017). You can enter the competition online at outdoorphotographymagazine. co.uk/c/win, using 'Village216' as the code, or send your answer to opcomp@thegmcgroup.com, stating 'Village216' as the subject. Alternatively, drop it in the post to: Where in the world - 'Village216', OP, 86 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 1XN.

Deadline for entries is midnight on 25 April 2017.

THIS MONTH'S PRIZE

Coleman Kobuck Valley 3 This month we've teamed up with

Coleman to give one lucky reader a Kobuck Valley 3 tent, worth £119! Easy to pitch, the Kobuk Valley 3 is a practical threeperson dome tent with a peaked porch area that ensures optimum head height. Featuring Coleman's BlackOut Bedroom technology, which keeps 99% of daylight out to help you have a longer and more restful sleep, the tent includes fibreglass poles and a high performance WeatherTec flysheet with an impressive 4,500mm hydrostatic head. Ventilation openings offer good airflow and reduced condensation, plus a riser PE groundsheet in the porch and a fully integrated bedroom groundsheet ensure clean and dry camping. This is ideal for

those lower level stays under the stars during the spring and summer seasons. Find out more at coleman.eu/uk

JANUARY ISSUE WINNER

In our January issue, we asked you to name the wilderness landscape shown in the image. The correct answer is:

c) The Kimberley, Australia



Ginny Campbell from Dartmouth is the winner of the Keen Wanderer Low WP hiking boots. Congratulations!

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