

THE IRIS

MAGAZINE OF THE NATURE GROUP OF THE RPS
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THE **RPS**
ROYAL
PHOTOGRAPHIC
SOCIETY



The Nature Group Annual Exhibition 2019



A DVD containing all of the accepted images from the 2019 Exhibition is now available to order online from the RPS Shop. Priced at only £10

See the RPS website for more details

An Introduction to Video **A One-Day Workshop for Nature Photographers** **to be given by Tom Middleton of SMN Film**

Sunday 15th September 2019, 10.00 – 17.00hrs

Foxton Village Hall, Hardman Road, Foxton, Cambridge, CB22 6RN

**Nature Photographers: if you are a novice in using your DSLR
or mirrorless camera to take videos, then this workshop is for you!**

By the end of the workshop you will have made a correctly exposed, creatively composed nature video taken with your DSLR or mirrorless camera. No previous experience of shooting video is required, but you should be a competent nature photographer. You will need a DSLR or mirrorless camera capable of shooting video and lens.

The morning session will be classroom based. The afternoon will be a field session during which you will work in pairs and each individual will take a short nature video.

Further information including how to book your place and a detailed Information Pack is available on the RPS Website: <http://www.rps.org/events/2019/september/15/an-introduction-to-video> or contact the Event Organiser: Thomas Hanahoe FRPS email: info@hanahoephotography.com

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Copy should be sent as .txt or .doc files by email or wetransfer.com. Please do not send hand written copy.

Digitally captured photographic images are preferred but scanned transparencies are also acceptable. Images (whether vertical or horizontal) should be supplied on CD or via WeTransfer.com as flattened 8bit sRGB Tiff files, 6" x 4" at 300 pixels per inch (1800 x 1200 pixels, file size approx 6.17MB). Please do not send larger images. Larger files may be needed for the cover.

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Cover image
Annual Exhibition 2019
Print Gold medal Winner
Common Blue Damselflies Mating by
Darron Matthews ARPS

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Vice-President of the Society;

Director General of the Society;

Hon. Treasurer of the Society;

Chairman of the Nature A & F Distinctions Panel

Nature Group Exhibitions

CDs/DVDs of Nature Group Exhibitions are available for purchase by camera clubs/photographic societies for use in their programme. Please contact the Exhibition Secretary, details above.

Editorial

It was a pleasure to see how photographs in this year's Members Exhibition have improved yet again. Sadly, like many of you, my entries were not chosen for a mention in dispatches this year. Never mind! When this happens I do not get downhearted and remind myself that one's view (judges included) of the quality of a photograph is largely subjective. This point was borne out by the acceptance of one of my prints in this year's exhibition that was rejected last year. For me photography is a hobby to enjoy and to satisfy my own creative energy, although I would agree that it does feel good to have this creativity acknowledged by others from time to time! Improving my technique is important to me. I like to see the work of other photographers and if I see something I particularly like I will seek them out to find out how they did it.

I have made subtle changes to the way photographs are titled in this edition of The Iris. In the past I placed some titles over the picture and feedback from readers tells me that this can be a distraction. I also think it often makes these titles difficult to read. Picture titles in this issue are now separate from, but nearby, the photographs. I would be pleased to hear members' thoughts about The Iris and how it might be improved.

I would like to thank all of you that have contributed to this issue. Many thanks as well to Dawn Osborn FRPS for her continuing help and support in the production of The Iris, and especially her excellent proof reading.

This edition has plenty to read and I hope it encourages others of you to submit an article for a future edition. I have some guide lines I can send you to help plan your article. Just drop me an email and I will be pleased to send them along.

Enjoy your summer photography!



From the chair

I am honoured to be elected chairman of the Nature Group and on behalf of all Nature Group members, I thank the Immediate Past Chairman, Kevin Elsby FRPS, and the members of the Committee for their work during the last two years. I am grateful that Kevin and most of his colleagues continue to serve on the Committee. However, some have now completed their terms of office and I extend my sincere thanks to Gordon Follows ARPS, John Jones ARPS, Barbara Lawton FRPS and Richard Revels FRPS on their retirement from the Committee. I also welcome as new members Julia Andrew LRPS, James Foad LRPS, Ann Miles FRPS and Julia Wainright ARPS and look forward to working with the new Committee over the next two years.

Alongside Kevin Elsby FRPS and Roger Hance FRPS, I was delighted to be a Selector for the Group's 2019 Annual Exhibition. The Exhibition Secretary, Ralph Snook ARPS did an excellent job in receiving all the submissions and managing the arrangements for the selection process and, as a result of his endeavours, on the day all progressed smoothly. The quality of the submitted images was excellent with many first class photographs and it was a difficult task. I was most impressed by the standard of both the projected images and the prints and it was good to see again the award winning images at the Annual Exhibition.

Total financial income from the 2019 Exhibition was £1144 with an expenditure of £1372. Table 1 provides details of the numbers of images submitted and those selected.

The Annual General Meeting and Opening of the Exhibition at Smethwick Photographic Society in early April was well attended. We were entertained in the morning with talks from Trevor Davenport ARPS on Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons National Parks and by Ann Miles FRPS on The Bizarre and Beautiful in the Insect World. During the morning coffee break and over lunch we had opportunity to view the Exhibition Prints.

The AGM followed in the afternoon. The Chairman Kevin Elsby FRPS had sent apologies for absence and consequently the meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chairman and Treasurer, David O'Neill LRPS.

He informed the meeting that the Group was in a very sound financial position with an annual surplus for the year of £5979 with an account balance of £25,572. During the following discussion members suggested that it may be advantageous to reduce the amount of money presently held within the Group's account.

After the AGM I took the Chair and was pleased to be able to award the Medals and Certificates to the winning photographers, following which we were all captivated by projection of the Exhibition Digital Images. It was a most enjoyable day and thanks to the Smethwick PS, and particularly Barbra Lawton FRPS, for hosting the event.

I am delighted to announce that the Committee has now had opportunity to consider the current financial position and, in light of the Treasurer's Report at the AGM and the subsequent discussion, it has agreed that for the 2020 Nature Group Exhibition the Entry Fee will be removed: whereas in 2019 the cost of entry to the Exhibition was £8, next year to enter the Exhibition will be free. I should add that, although most Members personally collect their prints from Smethwick without charge, the cost of returning prints to Members by mail will remain at £8. The Committee hopes that this action will encourage many more members to submit their nature images for selection to be included within next year's Exhibition.

Each of the field events offered by the Nature Group (<http://rps.org/special-interest-groups/nature/events>) provides a good opportunity to obtain some appropriate Exhibition images and to talk with colleagues about photographic issues.

I would wish to encourage all Members to make full use of these occasions and if you have a suitable venue for an event on your own patch then please contact out Programme Coordinator Ann Miles FRPS (annmiles70@gmail.com) who will be most pleased to help you set up an event.

I hope you enjoy reading the Iris and I thank the Editor, Gerald Griffin ARPS, for producing another

Thom

TABLE 1
2019 NATURE GROUP ANNUAL EXHIBITION

Image	Number Submitted	Number Selected	% Selected
Printed	334	129	39
Projected	777	211	27
Total	1111	340	31



FUNGI – THE HIDDEN KINGDOM

Tony Bond FRPS

For many years fungi were regarded simply as nature's great recyclers, rotting down organic matter and returning it to the soil. It was also known that orchids are dependent on symbiotic relationships with fungi. Research has shown that this is the norm for a wide variety of trees and plants and not the exception as I found when I tried to establish winter aconites in my garden. Fungi do not contain chlorophyll and cannot make sugars. Therefore they obtain them from trees and plants and in return supply them with nutrients and minerals. The mycelium of a fungus is able to link a variety of plants and this accounts for the largest living organism on Earth being a fungus. For this reason the fungi have been called the internet of the natural world.

Although the hidden mycelium is constantly active we only become aware of it when it fruits and hopefully provides us with something to photograph. Fruit bodies can be found at any time of year but most fungi fruit in the Autumn. Not even the expert mycologists can predict whether we are going to have a good Autumn and, unlike plants, fungi do not

necessarily fruit every year. Weather is critical for the Autumn fungi with warm, moist weather favoured.

Any nature image is of no value unless it is correctly identified. The best way to learn about identification of fungi is to go on forays with experienced people. There are fungus groups in most parts of the UK and you will learn how and where to look in your area. Features such as gills or pores, gill attachment, habitat and surrounding vegetation all help identification. Mycologists frequently take examples home for microscopic examination. I am far from being an expert microscopist but I have sometimes found it useful to examine the spores for colour, size, shape and texture. I have met mycologists who will not identify a fungus from a photograph. Given additional information will frequently result in some suggestions as to the species.

So why photograph fungi? They are a vital part of the natural world and deserve recording. Nobody knows how many species there are in Britain. I have seen estimates varying from 12,000 to 15,000 so there are plenty of potential subjects. I find the variety of colour, shapes and sizes fascinating. I normally use a full frame camera with a 105mm. macro lens. A 60mm macro is sometimes useful in



The Photographs

Left: Fly agaric, *Amanita muscaria*

Above: Clustered Bonnet, *Mycena inclinata*
Common Puffball, *Lycoperdon perlatum*

Below: Lawyer's Wig, *Coprinus comatus*
Orange Peel fungus, *Aleuria aurantia*

Bottom row: Black Morel, *Morchella elata*
Lawyer's Wig, *Coprinus comatus*
Phallus duplicatus





confined habitats. Wide angle shots can be very effective but are hard to come by as they demand a suitable background. I use a 24mm. lens with a 2 dioptre, 2 element supplementary lens. As a member of the old school I am not in favour of hand holding with a high ISO rating and regard a tripod as essential. I have used an original Baby Benbo for many years. I have occasionally found myself needing more height and then use a Trekker. The tripod is topped off with a Manfrotto geared head which is slow but precise with no backlash.

The choice of subject can be important. If the fungus you have just found is in an untidy situation which would demand a lot of gardening it may be better to see if there is a better specimen in the area. The fungus should be in good, undamaged condition. Slugs and snails are fond of fungi and some of the

worst offenders are people. The worst lighting for a fungus is direct sunlight which leads to unmanageable contrast. I employ a Lastolite diffuser to cast a light shadow over the subject. A reflector is essential and I sometimes use a reflector and diffuser together. On a gloomy day in woodland you may have the opposite problem of very flat lighting. Sparkle can be added by the discreet use of off-camera flash which is so easy in these days of TTL flash metering. It is essential that the use of flash is not obvious and there are no secondary shadows.

As with many aspects of natural history, photographing fungi is relatively easy but to do it well is not. However I have found it very rewarding and am hoping for a busy Autumn.

The Photographs

Opposite, far left: *Phallus duplicatus*
Opposite, left: Semifree Morel, *Mitrophora semiliberata* and Shaggy Scalycap, *Pholiota squarrosa*

Opposite below: Scarlet Waxcap, *Hygrocybe coccinea*

This page, right: Scarlet Elfcup, *Sarcoscypha austriaca*
Below: Velvet Shank, *Flammulina velutipes* and Yellow Club, *Clavulinopsis helvola*



MY ARPS JOURNEY - BIRDS OF CONSERVATION CONCERN

Maggie Bullock ARPS

I gained my LRPS in April 2016 but was already hooked on bird photography by that time. Though not a traditional bird watcher I had always been interested in birds and wanted to learn more about their identification and behaviour. I love getting out into the countryside, the uncertainty of what I might find to photograph and the sense of achievement in producing a pleasing image. After putting an initial panel together I continued to take further pictures for about a year before attending an advisory session in Bath in July 2017.

The Statement of Intent is important as it defines what your panel is all about and gives it purpose. A key part of maintaining the commitment to complete the process is to pick a subject matter that you feel very enthusiastic about.

Whilst online I found an article and list of 'Birds of Conservation Concern' and was surprised that the amber and red lists included birds such as: Mallards, House Sparrows, Starlings and Greenfinch, birds which had always been thought of as common. This would form the basis of my Statement of Intent.

Feedback at my advisory session included some common bird photography errors, such as: lack of detail in highlight areas, more space required around the bird, images not sharp enough and halos introduced possibly due to sharpening techniques. In addition to these fundamental issues there were positive comments about the action and composition of the shots. I had a lot to learn and improve on!

A second advisory session followed in January

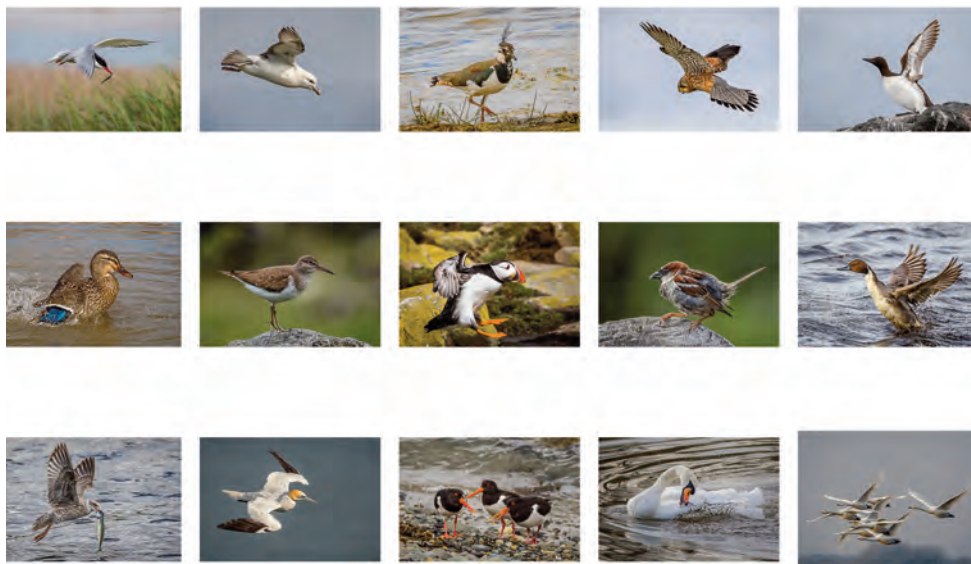
2018. I had learnt about exposure compensation and improved my in-camera sharpness and post processing techniques, especially relating to sharpening within Photoshop. After replacing quite a few images from my original panel I had high hopes that I would have cracked it. Unfortunately, although there were fewer comments relating to previous issues, a number of the images were considered not to be strong enough or showing enough action or behaviour within the panel. Back to the drawing board!

Overall, one of the most difficult aspects was deciding whether an image was up to standard, though this image selection process is clearly part of the learning curve. Other areas of complexity related to ensuring that the colours and tones within the panel (the 16th image) are pleasing and cohesive. Further to this, for a printed panel, choice of paper is important and colours and tones need to be maintained within the prints. In terms of image orientation, I started off with alternate landscape/portrait images but eventually abandoned this, as it just added to the complexity of image selection.

In July 2018 I submitted what I hoped would be a final panel for online advice and received much more positive feedback. After changing a couple of further images I attended my assessment in September 2018 and was delighted to pass and also have my prints retained by the RPS. In addition my panel has been included within the ARPS Distinction galleries on the RPS website.



ARPS Hanging Plan

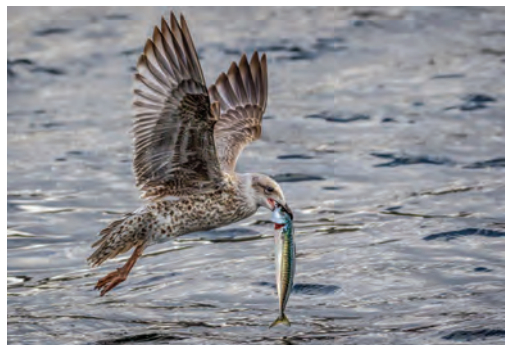
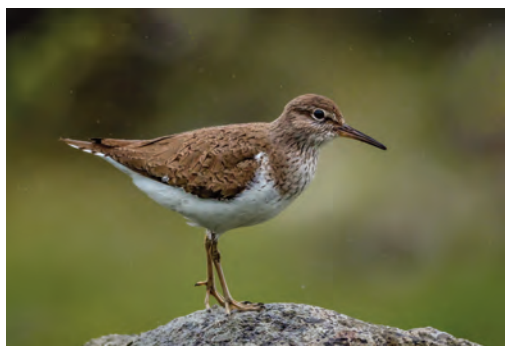
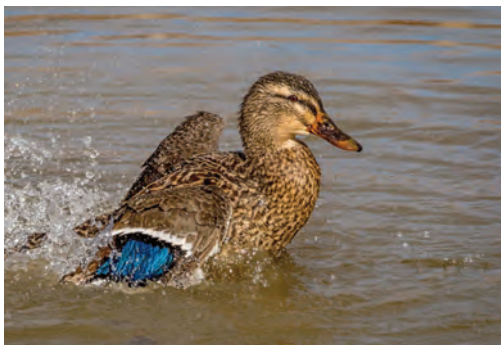


ARPS Statement of Intent

My panel submission consists of birds listed on the Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (BoCC 4) Amber and Red lists, published in December 2015, which summarises the status of UK birds. I came across this document whilst browsing the RSPB website and was very surprised at some of the birds contained within these lists, e.g. the Mute Swan, the House Sparrow.

The objective is to highlight some of the many birds where there is concern about decline in numbers and in addition show the diversity and character of these beautiful creatures.







The Photographs

(in order of appearance)

Arctic tern, *Sterna paradisaea*
 Fulmar, *Fulmarus glacialis*
 Lapwing, *Vanellus vanellus*
 Kestrel, *Falco tinnunculus*
 Guillemot, *Uria aalge*
 Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos*
 Common sandpiper, *Actitis hypoleucos*
 Puffin, *Fratercula arctica*
 House sparrow, *Passer domesticus*
 Pintail, *Anas acuta*
 Herring Gull, *Larus argentatus*
 Gannet, *Morus bassanus*
 Oystercatchers, *Haematopus ostralegus*
 Mute Swans, *Cygnus olor*
 Whooper swans, *Cygnus cygnus*





Digital Image Gold medal Alpine Waxwing by Nigel Spencer ARPS



The RPS Nature Group Annual Exhibition 2019



Print Gold medal
Common Blue
Damselflies mating by
Darron Matthews ARPS



PDI Bronze medal
Mycena Inclinata by
Janice Clark LRPS



Print Bronze medals Winter Fieldfare and Iceland Poppy by Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS



Selector's Choice
Marsh Helleborine and Fly
Orchid by Yealand Kalfayan



PDI Bronze medal Common Snipe with
leech by Mike Lane FRPS



Selector's Choice continued

Bleeding Fairy Helmet by Graeme Clarke ARPS
 Nest building Goldfinch by Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS Ian
 Wild Pine Marten female with Kit by Ian Mitchell ARPS
 Digger Wasp with caterpillar prey by Richard Revels FRPS
 Bird's-Foot Trefoil (*Lotus alpinus*) by John Bebbington FRPS
 Dalmatian Pelican by Richard Coles LRPS
 Orange-Milking Mycena by Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS
 Mudstone formations by Barrie Glover ARPS
 Northern Pintail taking off by Koshy Johnson FRPS
 Eagle Fox stand-off by Duncan Locke LRPS





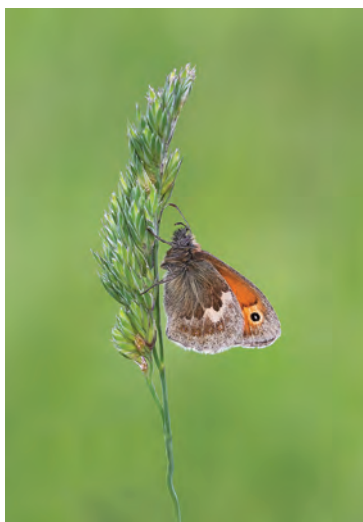
Highly commended

Male Banded Demoiselle by Trevor Davenport ARPS

Grizzly Bears fighting by Sarah Kelman ARPS

Grasshopper Warbler by Adrian Langdon ARPS







Highly commended continued

Black-Veined Whites mating in the Rain by Lesley Simpson ARPS

Male Cleopatra nectaring on Lavender by Lesley Simpson ARPS

Wood Sandpiper by Adrian Langdon ARPS

Marsh Helleborine by Duncan Locke LRPS

Small Red Damselflies mating by Darron Matthews ARPS

Female Meadow Brown Butterfly by Darron Matthews ARPS

Wind Blown patterns of Gypsum, New Mexico by Dawn Osborn FRPS

Saxifraga moschata by Dawn Osborn FRPS

Southern Marsh Orchid inflorescence by Dawn Osborn FRPS

Common Spotted Orchids by Richard Revels FRPS

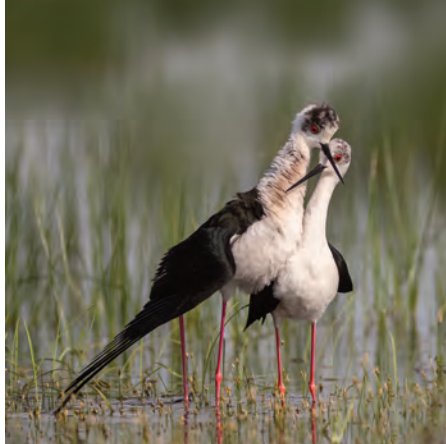
White Helleborine by Nigel Symington LRPS

Green Forest Lizard *Calotes calotes* by Roger Barnes ARPS

Ascalaphid by James Black ARPS







Highly commended continued

Fly Agaric by Janice Clark LRPS

Shaggy Parasol by Graeme Clarke ARPS

Black-winged Stilts pair bonding by Mick Durham FRPS

Niobe Fritillary by Chris Ellison ARPS

Female Emperor Moth by Matthew James Clarke

Iris Seedpods by Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS

Puff Balls releasing spores by Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS

Avocets fighting by Gordon Follows ARPS

Beewolf Wasp with Honeybee prey by Simon Jenkins ARPS

Spot-billed Pelican drinking by Koshi Johnson FRPS

Yellow-legged Gulls by Mike Lane FRPS

Tufted Evening Primrose by Adrian Langdon ARPS

Otter with Ballen Wrasse by Jeremy Malley-Smith LRPS

High Brown Fritillary by Douglas Neve

Bittern in flight by Richard Nicoll ARPS

The Nature Group Annual Exhibition 2019

Accepted Prints

Award	Author	Title
Gold medal	Darron Matthews ARPS	Common Blue Damsselflies mating
Bronze medal	Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Winter Fieldfare
	Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Iceland Poppy
Selector's Choice	Graeme Clarke ARPS	Bleeding Fairy Helmet
	Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Nest building Goldfinch
	Yealand Kalfayan	Marsh Helleborine
	Yealand Kalfayan	Fly Orchid
	Ian Mitchell ARPS	Wild Pine Marten Female with Kit
	Richard Revels FRPS	Digger Wasp with caterpillar prey
Highly commended	Trevor Davenport ARPS	Male Banded Demoiselle
	Sarah Kelman ARPS	Grizzly Bears fighting
	Lesley Simpson ARPS	Black-Veined Whites mating in the rain
	Lesley Simpson ARPS	Male Cleopatra nectaring on Lavender
	Adrian Langdon ARPS	Grasshopper Warbler
	Adrian Langdon ARPS	Wood Sandpiper
	Duncan Locke LRPS	Marsh Helleborine
	Darron Matthews ARPS	Small Red Damsselflies mating
	Darron Matthews ARPS	Female Meadow Brown Butterfly
	Dawn Osborn FRPS	Wind Blown Patterns of Gypsum, New Mexico
	Dawn Osborn FRPS	<i>Saxifraga moschata</i>
	Dawn Osborn FRPS	Southern Marsh Orchid inflorescence
	Richard Revels FRPS	Common Spotted Orchids
	Nigel Symington LRPS	White Helleborine
Author	Title	Award
Julia Andrew LRPS	Juvenile Gannet in flight	
Kevin Peter Blood	Little Egret Resting	
Kevin Peter Blood	Green Woodpecker resting	
Kevin Peter Blood	Male Sparrowhawk	
Bob Breach	Banded Demoiselle	
Maggie Bullock ARPS	Whooper Swans landing	
Maggie Bullock ARPS	Marsh Tit taking flight	
Maggie Bullock ARPS	Common Sandpiper in the rain	
Andrew C Chu ARPS	Arctic Terns interaction	
Andrew C Chu ARPS	Four-spotted Chaser	
Graeme Clarke ARPS	Pig's Ear Fungus	
Graeme Clarke ARPS	Bleeding Fairy Helmet	Selector's Choice
Graeme Clarke ARPS	Common Puffball	
Julie Claydon ARPS	Dalmatian Pelican	
Sandy Cleland FRPS	Sedge Warbler landing with moth	
Sandie Cox ARPS	Grey Wolf	
Liz Cutting ARPS	Otter on Rock, Jura	
Liz Cutting ARPS	Wilson's Plover with crab	
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Snow Encrusted Bison	
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Male Banded Demoiselle	Highly commended
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Hairy Hawker Dragonfly	
Roy Dorkins	Badger	

Roy Dorkins	Male Sparrowhawk	
Tim Downton ARPS	Grey Heron strut	
Tim Downton ARPS	Squacco Heron with catch	
Tim Downton ARPS	Bittern at sunrise	
Tim Downton ARPS	Glossy Ibis with leech	
Wendy Margaret Burton Eve ARPS	Lizardfish with Whitebelly Toby Pufferfish	
Wendy Margaret Burton Eve ARPS	White Spotted Hermit Crab	
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Mountain Hare in deep snow	
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Two-Tailed Pasha feeding on fallen fruit	
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Nest building Goldfinch	Selector's Choice
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Winter Fieldfare	Bronze medal
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Iceland Poppy	Bronze medal
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Yellow Spotted Gentian	
Brian Ferry LRPS	Stagshorn Fungus	
James Foad LRPS	<i>Mycena SP</i>	
Gordon Follows ARPS	Common Egret preening at nest	
Gordon Follows ARPS	Whiskered Tern with Dragonfly	
Gerald Griffin ARPS	African Fish Eagle	
Gerald Griffin ARPS	Mudpot - Iceland	
Gerald Griffin ARPS	Glaciers - Southern Andes	
John Haigh ARPS	Northern Giant Petrel	
John Haigh ARPS	King Penguins and Antarctic Fur Seal	
Martin Hancock	Osprey feeding	
Stewart Haynes	Kingfisher	
Stewart Haynes	Antillean Crested Hummingbird	
Stewart Haynes	European Bee-eater	
John Jones ARPS	Lichens on metal rich acid rock	
Yealand Kalfayan	Cretan Festoon basking at sunrise	
Yealand Kalfayan	Dark Green Fritillary feeding on dung	
Yealand Kalfayan	Marsh Fritillary on grass	
Yealand Kalfayan	Apollo on Mountain Sanicle	
Yealand Kalfayan	Marsh Helleborine	Selector's Choice
Yealand Kalfayan	Fly Orchid	Selector's Choice
Sarah Kelman ARPS	Grizzly Bears fighting	Highly commended
Bryan Knox ARPS	White Bellied Sea Eagles mating	
Bryan Knox ARPS	Great Bustard starting his display	
Eddy Lane ARPS	Bird Cliffs, Svalbard	
Pamela Lane ARPS	Cheetah with Young Cubs, Mara	
Adrian Langdon ARPS	Grasshopper Warbler	Highly commended
Adrian Langdon ARPS	Short-eared Owl	
Adrian Langdon ARPS	Wood Sandpiper	Highly commended
Duncan Locke LRPS	Whooper Swans	
Duncan Locke LRPS	Prowling Tiger	
Duncan Locke LRPS	Eagles fighting	
Duncan Locke LRPS	Cliff Face erosion	
Duncan Locke LRPS	Marsh Helleborine	Highly commended
Jean Manson	Pink Footed Geese migration	
Jean Manson	Reed Bunting	
Michael Marshall	Mountain Gorilla, Rwanda	
Darron Matthews ARPS	Small Red Damselflies mating	Highly commended
Darron Matthews ARPS	Female Meadow Brown Butterfly	Highly commended
Darron Matthews ARPS	Male Banded Demoiselle	
Darron Matthews ARPS	Common Blue Damselflies mating	Gold medal

Dave McKay ARPS	Crested Tit	
Dave McKay ARPS	White-tailed Sea Eagle	
Dave McKay ARPS	Biscuit Basin, Yellowstone	
Dave McKay ARPS	Mammoth Spring rock formation	
Ian McLean ARPS	Scarce Swallowtail - mud puddling	
Ian McLean ARPS	Barn Owl - hunting	
Ann Miles FRPS	Stag Beetles sparring	
Ann Miles FRPS	Black-veined White	
Ann Miles FRPS	Green-winged Orchid	
Ann Miles FRPS	Pine Cone Toadstool	
Ann Miles FRPS	Heath Spotted Orchid	
Ian Mitchell ARPS	Red Squirrel eating a nut	
Ian Mitchell ARPS	Stretching yawning Mountain Hare	
Ian Mitchell ARPS	Wild Pine Marten Female with kit	Selector's Choice
Richard Nicoll ARPS	Reed Warbler	
Richard Nicoll ARPS	Great Crested Grebe with Perch	
Richard Nicoll ARPS	Bittern	
Richard Nicoll ARPS	Roe Deer leaping	
Dawn Osborn FRPS	Leopard Watching from a grassy mound	
Dawn Osborn FRPS	Snowy Egret displaying	
Dawn Osborn FRPS	White Morph Reddish Egret canopy fishing	Highly commended
Dawn Osborn FRPS	Wind Blown Patterns of Gypsum, New Mexico	Highly commended
Dawn Osborn FRPS	<i>Saxifraga Moschata</i>	Highly commended
Dawn Osborn FRPS	Southern Marsh Orchid inflorescence	
Barrie Parker LRPS	Leopard Climbing with Reedbuck kill	
Barrie Parker LRPS	Wildebeest Migration river crossing	
Barrie Parker LRPS	African Wattled Plover	
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Dunlin with crab	
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Magellenic Oystercatcher displaying	
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Ear Pick Fungus	
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Namaqua Daisies in environment	
Richard Revels FRPS	Red Squirrel, in Scotland	
Richard Revels FRPS	Cardinal Beetle preparing for flight	
Richard Revels FRPS	Black Hairstreak Butterfly	
Richard Revels FRPS	Digger Wasp with caterpillar prey	Selector's Choice
Richard Revels FRPS	Magpie Fungus	
Richard Revels FRPS	Common Spotted Orchids	Highly commended
Richard Revels FRPS	Lichen, <i>Cladonia spp</i> with Fruiting Bodies	
Mike Rowe FRPS	Imperial Shag landing	
Frank Schweitzer	Bearded Reedling On seed grasses	
Frank Schweitzer	Six-spot Burnet Moths mating	
Lesley Simpson ARPS	Black-veined Whites mating in the Rain	Highly commended
Lesley Simpson ARPS	Male Cleopatra nectaring on Lavender	Highly commended
Lesley Simpson ARPS	Silver-washed Fritillary nectaring	
Lesley Simpson ARPS	<i>Ophrys elegans</i>	
Lesley Simpson ARPS	Pyramid Orchid trio	
Peter Smith	Black Turnstone	
Ralph Snook ARPS	Openbill Stork at sunrise	
Ralph Snook ARPS	Great Blue Heron with catch	
Ralph Snook ARPS	Pelicans at dawn	
Paul Stillman LRPS	Great Spotted Woodpecker and juvenile Starling	
Nigel Symington LRPS	White Helleborine	Highly commended
Nigel Symington LRPS	Common Spotted-orchid in habitat	
Gordon Wilcock LRPS	Green Woodpecker feeding on anthill	

The Nature Group Annual Exhibition 2019

Accepted Projected Digital Images

Award	Author	Title
Gold medal	Nigel Spencer ARPS	Waxwing
Bronze medal	Janice Clark LRPS	<i>Mycena inclinata</i>
	Mike Lane FRPS	Common Snipe with Leech
Selector's Choice	John Bebbington FRPS	Alpine Bird's-Foot Trefoil (<i>Lotus alpinus</i>)
	Richard Coles LRPS	Dalmation Pelican
	Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Orange-Milking <i>Mycena</i>
	Barrie Glover ARPS	Mudstone Formations
	Koshy Johnson FRPS	Northern Pintail Taking Off
	Duncan Locke LRPS	Eagle Fox Stand-Off
Highly commended	Roger Barnes ARPS	Green Forest Lizard <i>Calotes calotes</i>
	James Black ARPS	Ascalaphid
	Janice Clark LRPS	Fly Agaric
	Graeme Clarke ARPS	Shaggy Parasol
	Matthew James Clarke	Female Emperor Moth (<i>Saturnia pavonia</i>)
	Mick Durham FRPS	Black-Winged Stilts Pair Bonding
	Chris Ellison ARPS	Niobe Fritillary
	Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Iris Seedpods
	Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Puff Balls Releasing Spores
	Gordon Follows ARPS	Avocets Fighting
	Simon Jenkins ARPS	Beewolf Wasp with Honeybee Prey
	Koshy Johnson FRPS	Spot-billed Pelican Drinking Mid Flight
	Yealand Kalfayan	Black-Veined White Amongst Horsetails
	Mike Lane FRPS	Yellow-Legged Gulls
	Adrian Langdon ARPS	Tufted Evening Primrose
	Jeremy Malley-Smith LRPS	Otter with Ballen Wrasse
	Douglas Neve	High Brown Fritillary
	Richard Nicoll ARPS	Bittern in Flight
	John Simpson ARPS	Elder-Flowered Orchid
	John Wichall ARPS	Short-Eared Owl in Late Afternoon Sun

Author	Title	Award
Hazel Acford LRPS	Golden Mantled Ground Squirrel	
Jon Ashton ARPS	Fieldfare	
Jon Ashton ARPS	Fallowdeer Buck	
Nigel Atkins LRPS	Damselfly	
Roger Barnes ARPS	<i>Nemoptera bipennis</i> with Beetle in Flight	
Roger Barnes ARPS	Ovum of Small White <i>Pieris rapae</i>	
Roger Barnes ARPS	Green Forest Lizard <i>Calotes calotes</i>	Highly commended
Roger Barnes ARPS	Sleeping Beauty <i>Oxalidaceae corniculata</i>	
John Bebbington FRPS	Alpine Bird's-Foot Trefoil (<i>Lotus Alpinus</i>)	Selector's Choice
James Black ARPS	Ascalaphid	Highly commended
James Black ARPS	Swallowtail Newly Emerged	
James Black ARPS	Asphodel	
James Black ARPS	Comfrey	
David Blake LRPS	African Lioness SF3 and Running Cubs	
Kevin Peter Blood	Male Gadwall Displaying	
John Boyd ARPS	Kingfisher Rising	
John Boyd ARPS	Osprey with a Brown Trout	

Bill Budd	Juniper Tree in Utah Desert	
Maggie Bullock ARPS	Wild Kestrel hovering	
Maggie Bullock ARPS	Water Rail	
Maggie Bullock ARPS	Wild Kestrel taking flight	
John Bulpitt FRPS	Bright Horsefly	
John Bulpitt FRPS	Robber Flies	
John Bulpitt FRPS	Rose Chafer Beetles	
John Bulpitt FRPS	Heath Spotted Orchids	
Peter Burkill	Pine Marten and Loch Etive	
John Chamberlin FRPS	Female Pied Flycatcher with food	
John Chamberlin FRPS	King Penguin scolding chick	
Andrew C Chu ARPS	Japanese Lotus	
Janice Clark LRPS	Four-spotted Chaser on Bluebell	
Janice Clark LRPS	<i>Mycena inclinata</i>	Bronze medal
Janice Clark LRPS	Fly Agaric	Highly commended
Graeme Clarke ARPS	Sable	
Graeme Clarke ARPS	Stinging Nettle Rust Fungus	
Graeme Clarke ARPS	Branching Oyster Mushroom	
Graeme Clarke ARPS	Shaggy Parasol	Highly commended
Matthew James Clarke	Female Emperor Moth (<i>Saturnia pavonia</i>)	Highly commended
Julie Claydon ARPS	Dalmatian Pelican	
Trevor Clifford ARPS	Great Spotted Woodpecker	
Richard Coles LRPS	Dalmation Pelican	Selector's Choice
Liz Cutting ARPS	Peringueys Adder, Namibia	
Liz Cutting ARPS	Back-lit Barn Owl	
Liz Cutting ARPS	Great White Egret with nest material	
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Spurge Hawk-Moth Caterpillar on food plant	
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Marbled White Butterfly	
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Purple Thorn Moth, 1st Generation	
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Velvet Shank, (<i>Flammulina voluptes</i>)	
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Lichen, <i>Caloplaca flavescens</i>	
Trevor Davenport ARPS	Lichen, <i>Caloplaca</i> SP, on Marble	
Gary Dean LRPS	Naked Man Orchid (<i>Orchis italica</i>), Spain	
Gary Dean LRPS	Iberian Fritillary, Spain	
Tim Downton ARPS	Roller with prey	
Mick Durham FRPS	Black-winged Stilts pair bonding	Highly commended
Mick Durham FRPS	Fulmar at sunset	
Mick Durham FRPS	Red Squirrel	
Mick Durham FRPS	Red Squirrel	
Mick Durham FRPS	Horse Chestnut Fruit	
Mick Durham FRPS	Woodland Fly Agaric	
Mick Durham FRPS	Honey Fungus	
Chuck Eccleston ARPS	Crab Spider with prey	
Chuck Eccleston ARPS	Sea Bindweed	
Chuck Eccleston ARPS	Wood Lily	
Chris Ellison ARPS	Niobe Fritillary	Highly commended
Michael Feeney ARPS	Bee Eaters	
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Chamois in Habitat	
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Weaver Beetle	
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Crested Caracara courtship display	
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Iris Seedpods	Highly commended
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Orange-Milking <i>Mycena</i>	Selector's Choice
Gianpiero Ferrari FRPS	Puff Balls releasing Spores	Highly commended
Gordon Follows ARPS	Avocets fighting	Highly commended
Gordon Follows ARPS	Grey Plover with Ragworm	
Gordon Follows ARPS	Squacco Heron with prey	

Stewart Forbes	Silvery Langur	
Rosemary Gillies ARPS	Anemone Fish, Philippines	
Rosemary Gillies ARPS	Chain Link Moray Eel, Bonaire	
Rosemary Gillies ARPS	Pair of Gobies and Shrimp	
Barrie Glover ARPS	<i>Echinocereus polyacanthus</i>	
Barrie Glover ARPS	Mudstone Formations	Selector's Choice
Gerald Griffin ARPS	Sucker Fish on Blue Whale	
John Haigh ARPS	Southern Giant Petrels fighting	
John Haigh ARPS	Black-browed Albatross	
Richard Hall LRPS	White Crowned Plover	
Richard Hall LRPS	Lily-trotter, African Jacana	
Richard Hall LRPS	Shaggy Mane Fungus	
Martin John Hancock LRPS	Brown Hare running	
Marston Hart ARPS	Lions Breath, Eastern Cape SA	
Marston Hart ARPS	Leaping Impala, Eastern Cape SA	
Kevin Harwood	Osprey with Butterfly Peacock Bass	
Kevin Harwood	Swallow-tailed Gull Preening	
Kevin Harwood	Little Blue Heron with fish fry	
Stewart Haynes	Piping Plover	
Stewart Haynes	King Penguins	
Stewart Haynes	Kestrel	
Margaret Hocking ARPS	Eastern Rock Sengis drinking	
Simon Jenkins ARPS	Beewolf Wasp with Honeybee prey	Highly commended
Simon Jenkins ARPS	Leaping Salmon	
Jan Jerome ARPS	Lichen on rock	
Koshy Johnson FRPS	Grey Heron attacking Snake	
Koshy Johnson FRPS	Grey Heron flying with Snake	
Koshy Johnson FRPS	Northern Pintail taking off	Selector's Choice
Koshy Johnson FRPS	Spot-billed Pelican drinking mid flight	Highly commended
Phil Jones ARPS	Kingfisher with catch	
Yealand Kalfayan	Black-Veined White amongst Horsetails	Highly commended
Yealand Kalfayan	Niobe Fritillary on Scabious	
Yealand Kalfayan	Martagon Lily	
Yealand Kalfayan	Long-lipped Serapias	
Patricia Kearton LRPS	European Bee-water yossing insect	
Linda Kremer	Cape Hare	
Linda Kremer	Pair of South African Penguins	
Bryan Knox ARPS	Snake's Head Fritillary	
Eddy Lane ARPS	Australasian Gannets	
Mike Lane FRPS	Common Snipe with Leech	Bronze medal
Mike Lane FRPS	Yellow-legged Gulls	Highly commended
Adrian Langdon ARPS	Hoopoe at nest	
Adrian Langdon ARPS	Bracket Fungi	
Adrian Langdon ARPS	Tufted Evening Primrose	Highly commended
Duncan Locke LRPS	Eagle Fox stand-off	Selector's Choice
Duncan Locke LRPS	Polar Bear drying off	
Duncan Locke LRPS	Soldier Beetles mating	
Caroline Ludford LRPS	Little Owl	
Tracey Lund	Underwater Gannets	
Tracey Lund	Yellowstone Coyote	
Rosamund Macfarlane ARPS	Puffin	
Rosamund Macfarlane ARPS	Arctic Ice	
Jeremy Malley-Smith LRPS	Otter with Ballen Wrasse	Highly commended
Jeremy Malley-Smith LRPS	Bee Orchid	
Jean Manson	European Brown Bear	

Michael Marshall	Black and Yellow Longhorn Beetle
Michael Marshall	American Skunk Cabbage
Darron Matthews ARPS	Six Spot Burnet mating
Darron Matthews ARPS	Female Ringlet Butterfly
Darron Matthews ARPS	Buff Ermine Moth
Peter McCloskey FRPS	Secretary Bird
Dave McKay ARPS	Crested Tit
Dave McKay ARPS	Herring Gull fishing
Julia McNeill Richardson LRPS	Red Squirrel with nut in heather
Julia McNeill Richardson LRPS	Sea Eagle with catch
Julia McNeill Richardson LRPS	Otter with pup
Richard Merritt FRPS	Mantis Shrimp swimming at night
Richard Merritt FRPS	Stony Coral Polyps fully open
Richard Merritt FRPS	Stony Coral Polyps partially closed
Richard Merritt FRPS	Bubble Coral detail
Ann Miles FRPS	Burnt-tip Orchids
Ann Miles FRPS	<i>Russula aeruginea</i>
Gordon Mills ARPS	Green Woodpecker
Douglas Neve	High Brown Fritillary
Richard Nicoll ARPS	Bittern in flight
David Osborn FRPS	Magellanic Oystercatchers displaying
David Osborn FRPS	Upland Geese goslings in sandstorm
David Osborn FRPS	<i>Baeospora myosura</i>
David Osborn FRPS	Birch Polypore
Dawn Osborn FRPS	Meadow Pipit with larvae
Dawn Osborn FRPS	Purple Sandpiper
Dawn Osborn FRPS	Great Sundew - <i>Drosera anglica</i>
Barrie Parker LRPS	Dung Beetle
Andrew Parsons ARPS	Hare running in long grass
Edward Payne	Northern Goshawk
Gill Peachey LRPS	Common Malachite Beetle on Meadow Foxtail
Gill Peachey LRPS	Green Nettle Weevil feeding
Ron Perkins ARPS	Black-tailed Godwit
Ron Perkins ARPS	Spoonbills fighting
Maurice Piper LRPS	African Lion, Greater Kruger, South Africa
David Plowchalk	African Wild Dog on the hunt in Mana Pools, Zimbabwe
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Great Egret with Snake
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Silver-washed Fritillary
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Laughing Gull food pass
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Crimson Waxcap
Ken Rasmussen ARPS	Purple Jellydisc Fungus
Richard Revels FRPS	Banded Demoiselles
Richard Revels FRPS	Bee Orchids
Jean Robson LRPS	December Moth with web
Jean Robson LRPS	Snail-Killing Fly
Jean Robson LRPS	Reed Bunting on a frosty morning
Mike Rowe FRPS	Arctic Tern Aerial courtship
Mike Rowe FRPS	Short-eared Owl over Campion
Mike Rowe FRPS	Clustered Bonnet
Mike Rowe FRPS	<i>Mycena SP</i>
Stanley A Saunders ARPS	North American Cray Fish
Vincent Scriven LRPS	Long-Eared Owl
Paul Sievers ARPS	Green-winged Orchids
Paul Sievers ARPS	Wood Cauliflower Fungus
Paul Sievers ARPS	Fly Agaric Fungi

Highly commended
Highly commended

Paul Sievers ARPS
 John Simpson ARPS
 John Simpson ARPS
 John Simpson ARPS
 John Simpson ARPS
 John Simpson ARPS
 John Simpson ARPS
 John Simpson ARPS
 Ralph Snook ARPS
 Ralph Snook ARPS
 Nigel Spencer ARPS
 Nigel Spencer ARPS
 Nigel Spencer ARPS
 Nigel Spencer ARPS
 Nigel Spencer ARPS
 Paul Stillman LRPS
 Nigel Symington LRPS
 Steve Taylor ARPS
 Steve Taylor ARPS
 Steve Taylor ARPS
 David Wessely ARPS
 John Wichall ARPS
 John Wichall ARPS
 John Wichall ARPS
 Gordon Wilcock LRPS
 Edward Wong
 Michael Yuille

Fly Agaric Fungi showing environment
 Broad-Bodied Chaser - male
 Cleopatra nectaring on *Dianthus*
 Black-veined White on Vetch
 Spotted Fritillary
 Elder-flowered Orchid
Ophrys mammosa
 Frog Orchid
Campanula cochlearifolia
 Leopard portrait
 Dowitcher jumping
 Black Grouse Lekking in the snow
 Black-throated Diver
 King Penguins
 Waxwing
 Porcelain Fungi
 Emperor Dragonfly Ovipositing
 Wood Anemones
 Wallace's Flying Frog Borneo
 Porcelain Fungus, New Forest
 Lichen Colonies, South Island, New Zealand
 Zebras drinking at night
 Greenshank fishing at speed
 Greenshank with Lugworm
 Short-eared Owl in late afternoon sun
 Cormorant with catch
 Dawn Redwood Panorama
 Crested Tit, backlit on a branch

Highly commended

Gold medal

Highly commended



Highly commended continued

Yealand Kalfayan: Black-veined White amongst horsetails
 Elder-flowered Orchid by John Simpson ARPS
 Short-eared Owl in late afternoon sun by John Wichall ARPS

JEWELS OF THE INSECT WORLD

Robert Thompson FRPS FIPF

Introduction

Dragonflies are among the oldest group of insects alive today. Their origins date back some 300 million years when dinosaurs roamed the earth. 'Devil's Darning Needles' and 'Horse Stingers' are some of the names that were used in ancient times to describe this fascinating group of insects. Even today their size and intimidating appearance still generates fear in some people. The aerial phase as winged insects in their life cycle has long held a fascination for naturalists and photographers.

However, despite the cynicisms of the past, dragonflies today are seen in a different light to their larger ancestral cousins. Often described as the 'Jewels of the insect world', they are benign, charismatic creatures and highly efficient predators. They have superb visual acuity, possessing 360° vision and an aerodynamic structure that is beautifully adapted for hunting and feeding on the wing. No other insect can match their speed or agility in the air. They are, without doubt, one of the largest and most colourful group of insects alive today. Walking along the bank of a slow-flowing river, or sitting quietly at the edge of a small lake or pond in early summer, will reveal many fascinating aspects about their habits and behaviour. They are a vital part of the biosphere and excellent indicators of environmental change and pollution. Many of the pristine habitats they occupy

epitomise some of the finest examples of natural wetland landscapes in our islands.

My interest in insects, particularly dragonflies, stems back to my childhood days spent on a large parkland estate where I grew up. I would spend most of the summer holidays collecting all manner of insects. I watched the daily behaviour of the damselflies in their masses performing all sorts of aerial displays at the water's edge. Although my natural history photography has diversified over the past twenty years, I still find them fascinating to watch and photograph.

Dragonflies are by nature aquatic insects and spend on average between one and three years (depending on species) below the water as a predatory larva. Their adult phase as a winged insect is relatively short, compared to their overall aquatic lifespan; on average, no more than a couple of weeks for most species, but a little longer for the larger hawkers dragonflies.

Identifying dragonflies in the field can be challenging for inexperienced photographers, but with



Left, Common Hawker (*Aeshna juncea*), green female form.

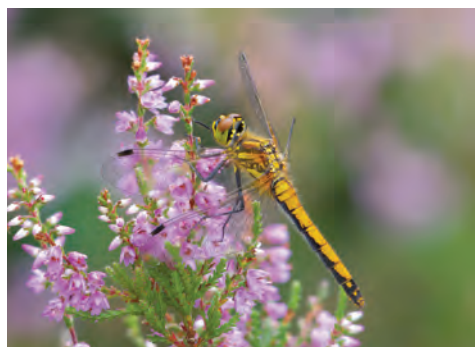
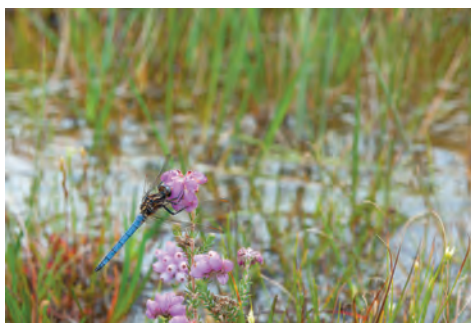
Above, Variable Damselfly (*Coenagrion pulchellum*), mature male.

time and observation, it is possible to become familiar with their behaviour or 'jizz', (as it's often referred to). Their flight period and habitat selection can also help with identification as well.

Dragonflies belong to the scientific order called Odonata (meaning tooth), which is subdivided into two groups. Anisoptera (true dragonflies) and Zygoptera (damselflies). True dragonflies are large, robust insects, that are brightly coloured and fast fliers. A reliable diagnostic feature is the wing position. All dragonflies rest with their wings held horizontal or depressed forwards when active and at flight temperature. Their perception of movement is exceptional; anyone who

has spent time observing and photographing these insects in the field can testify to the frustration of many lost opportunities.

The largest dragonflies are known as 'hawkers' and this group presents the biggest photographic challenge, which is



Left top, Common Hawker (Aeshna juncea), early instar larva. Note the underdeveloped wing buds, which signifies an immature larva. In the final instar larva these are well developed and much more pronounced.

Left middle, Large Red Damselfly (Pyrrhosoma nymphula), larva. Fully mature final instar larva close to emergence. Note the difference in shape and structure of the two larvae.

Left bottom, Black Darter (Sympetrum danae), female. Note the forward position of the wings which helps deflect heat away from the thorax.

Above top, Broad-bodied Chaser (Libellula depressa), male. A typical chaser dragonfly with a broad, flattened abdomen. Frequent over ponds and lake margins.

Above, Keeled Skimmer (Orthetrum coerulescens), male. A typical skimmer dragonfly. Sometimes when opportunities arise it is worth trying to set the species in context with its habitat, a more common approach these days. It also conveys information about the environment it occupies.

perhaps why you see few images of them in many of the popular photographic magazines. This is because during ideal flying conditions they rarely settle and often, spend hours hunting and feeding on the wing.

The smaller dragonflies are known as 'chasers', 'darters' and 'skimmers'. Many are territorial, preferring to perch on prominent reeds or stems from which they conduct aerial sorties, wageing battle with rival males and other species that invade their airspace. These smaller dragonflies are more frequently encountered and reasonably tolerant of approaching photographers. They tend to congregate around breeding pools especially during mid-morning.



Above, Large Red Damselfly (*Pyrrhosoma nymphula*), male. Note the wing position when at rest. The wings are held over the abdomen deflecting heat away from it.

Right top, Aquatic setup for photographing species in-situ. There are many advantages to this approach. See my latest book 'Close-up & Macro Photography (Its Art and Fieldcraft Techniques)' for further information.

Right bottom, Hairy Dragonfly (*Brachytron pratense*), male. Approaching timid species on days when they are highly active can be challenging. I used a 300mm lens in combination with extension tubes to keep my distance. It also helps with background control.

Damselflies, in contrast are much smaller, slender insects with long, narrow, delicate bodies, which are easily damaged. They have less agility in the air than dragonflies but are much easier to find. Adults are frequently seen sheltering among lush vegetation close to water. Most damselflies, with the exception of a few species, rest with their wings held together along their body. However, in optimum flying temperatures, some individuals and species settle with their wings partially open.

Photographic hardware

Camera technology and equipment are so good these days that it is possible to capture excellent images of insects even with a very modest setup. A long focal length macro around 180mm-200mm is ideal, but not essential. Their main advantage is having a continuous variable magnification up to lifesize without having to add and remove extension tubes, which can be an inconvenience in the field. These special purpose lenses are also highly corrected for flatness of field although this is less important when photographing three-dimensional subjects. If you do not own a macro, a medium telephoto with a focal length around 200mm will suffice in combination with extension tubes. This will allow the lens to focus closer than its minimum focusing distance and increase its reproduction ratio. Excellent results are possible using these sorts of combinations.



My current setup when working on insects consists of Nikon D850s with a wide range of lenses from 15mm to 300mm. I also use an R1C1 flash system and electronic wireless release units. I tend to use a single flash mounted above the lens as a fill-in when required. I work from a tripod as much as possible. This gives me stability, consistency in framing and allows me to choose a precise point of focus. I can also work at the cameras optimum ISO and use any aperture and shutter speed combination. I only resort to a monopod when the terrain is very difficult.

When photographing the larval stages, I shoot most of them in-situ using my aquatic field setup. I was commissioned many years ago to photograph the larval stages of Britain's dragonflies which I did using medium format. At the time I was also working on the publication the 'Natural History of Ireland's Dragonflies'. It took me several years to find, rear and photograph all of the resident British species at that time. Since then I have periodically revised some of the larval images.

One of my favourite setups for dragonfly photography is a 300mm lens in combination with extension tubes which gives an ideal working distance between lens and subject. My choice of lens is dictated by the type of image I want to create, the background and the behaviour of species I am portraying.

Shooting in close-up on high-res cameras means developing a precise, methodical technique as any shortcomings will be evident in the result. Aperture priority is my preferred method of working when the insect is active and defending a territory because it is normally static only for a brief period. I prefer manual focus when shooting in close-up, as I want to control the point of focus on the subject. Another handy accessory are kneepads as the terrain can often make working low down a very uncomfortable experience.

Fieldcraft

Dragonflies can be found from late spring onwards, but the peak flight period is during the late spring and early summer months. Familiarisation of the habits of the species is essential if you want to succeed in capturing images that exhibit natural behaviour and resting postures. Avoid the clichéd portraits, often complete with so-called 'early morning dew', evident in so many photographic magazines. Most have the hallmarks of poorly contrived setups complete with fingerprints on the membranous wing surfaces. These manufactured images often portray dragonflies and other popular insects in unnatural resting postures. This is often evident in the strange leg and body positions, which is clearly unnatural to those who have an understanding of insect behaviour

and ecology. Photographers who take the time to observe the habits and activities of their subjects will produce images that genuinely reflect their beauty and charisma.

Finding dragonflies is not as difficult as one might think. Careful exploration of the vegetation along the sheltered margins of lakes, ponds and pools on



Top, Common Hawker (*Aeshna juncea*), emerging male. Searching the marginal vegetation around breeding pools early in the morning can often be rewarding as in this case. I was able to approach and photograph these emerging dragonflies.

Bottom, Four-spotted Chaser (*Libellula quadrimaculata*), emerging female.

heaths and bogs, early in the morning, will often reveal emerging and resting adults. This is a good way of locating the large hawk dragonflies, which have settled overnight in the vegetation close to breeding territories. At this time, temperatures are generally below the threshold for flight and adults can be approached with care and photographed using a tripod. Large hawk dragonflies are not capable of instant flight so rely on their colouration to break up their outline in the vegetation. The give away is often the faint rustling of wings, as you get close because, if alarmed, they will begin the warm-up process by vibrating their wings to raise their body temperature. Once this process is engaged, they will fly, and you have lost the moment. The smaller dragonflies and damselflies, when disturbed, tend to drop into the deeper parts of the vegetation making them more challenging to photograph.

It is also worth exploring sheltered areas in woodland; adults often hunt and rest in secluded rides and clearings in the late afternoon when activity is at its quietest around breeding sites. Females are much less encountered than males and stay away from water until they are ready to breed.

I generally prefer to photograph these insects in the late afternoon and early evening unless I am targeting emerging adults. They are usually easier to approach and will often perch for long periods if not disturbed. The main advantage of evening photography is the softer directional light and the gradual drop in temperature, which is to your advantage. I usually look for adults that are reasonably well isolated from the background vegetation if possible. Working on a tripod and using telephotos in the focal range of 200mm-300mm, provides a reasonable working distance. It is a good idea to take a few shots from a greater distance in case you spook your quarry and then work your way into a more favourable position. Familiarisation with your setup and technique is essential in my opinion.

Another important factor is the weather. Days with intermittent sunshine and partial cloud cover can be more productive photographically because adults often settle into the vegetation more frequently, especially when the sun disappears behind the clouds. Avoid the temptation to rush in too quickly, especially if the temperature is above the threshold for flight as adults are likely to fly immediately, and the opportunity will be lost. It often pays to wait for several minutes until their body temperature has dropped a little before

moving in as they are more likely to remain concealed in the vegetation. During overcast and breezy conditions dragonflies will seek out sheltered areas where the temperature is a little warmer and there is protection from the wind.

Finally, despite being challenging insects to photograph, dragonflies are fascinating creatures to watch and much can be learned from observation. There is no substitute for time spent in the field. It provides opportunities to practice and refine one's photographic technique and improve fieldcraft skills. Below are some tips and suggestions, which you may find helpful.

- Be mindful of your silhouette against the sky; this highlights your movements even more.
- Do not position yourself between the insect and sunlight because it will either reorientate itself or fly off.
- If you are photographing in bright sunshine target individuals which are perched on prominent pieces of vegetation rather than those resting among cluttered foliage. This will reduce the shadows among the vegetation, which can often be a distraction. It is a good idea to use a little fill flash in these situations to help control heavy shadow areas and produce a more balanced result.
- Select small pools for photography and observation as this makes it easier to get closer to your subject.
- Some dragonflies defend their territory from a prominent perch. You can often encourage a species (particularly chasers and darters) to a place of your choosing by pushing a small branch into the ground, which you can pre-focus on. Be patient; they habitually return to the same spot. This technique works well on small pools with not too much vegetation.
- Work from a tripod and electronic cable release whenever possible; or a monopod. Do not confine yourself to a single lens such as a short focal length macro. If you own longer telephotos use them with extension tubes as these combinations increase the lens to subject distance and are excellent for controlling background distraction and dealing with timorous species.
- Perfect your setup and fine-tune your technique on damselflies first, which are a lot more approachable.
- Purchase a good guidebook and read up on the biology and distribution of species in your area. Many regional guides have been published. The British Dragonfly Society, www.british-dragonflies.org.uk, is a large organisation dedicated to the welfare and conservation of these magnificent insects. It offers field trips in many areas and advice and information at county and national level.

COLOUR MANAGEMENT

by Thomas Hanahoe FRPS

There are many challenges in developing a digital image and in producing an acceptable print. I know from my own experience and from speaking with friends and colleagues that one of those challenges relates to how our images will look on different computer monitors. When we send our developed digital files to someone else we cannot be sure that s/he will see what we see. To obtain that assurance, both parties need a work flow informed by icc profiles as defined by the International Color Consortium which was established in 1993 by eight international companies including Adobe, Apple and Microsoft.

The computer monitor

It used to strike me as odd that in large electronics stores with many televisions showing the same programme the TVs would have widely differing pictures; some highly saturated with much contrast, others pale in comparison and most somewhere in between. Each TV received the same transmission but the colours on their screens were individually controlled by settings such as hue, saturation and contrast. As there was no correct mix of settings, each TV was tuned to individual taste. This approach is unsatisfactory with respect to digital photography.

Balanced colour spaces

RGB colour spaces such as sRGB, Adobe (1998) RGB and DCI-P3, are balanced colour spaces in that when the R, G and B numerical values are identical the resulting colour is a monochrome grey: for example, RGB 0,0,0 is black; 60,60,60 is a dark grey; 128,128,128 is mid grey; 190,190,190 is a light grey; and 255,255,255 is white.

Out of the box, most computer monitors are much too bright for photography. The brightness, saturation and contrast levels are factory set to please the eye rather than ensure luminosity and colour fidelity. Monitors to be used for photography need first to be adjusted before they are suitable for image development. You could use your eyes to make this adjustment but the human brain modulates the colour information we receive from our eyes to accommodate the impact of our environment. For

example, snow under a blue sky will reflect blue but the brain compensates for this effect so that we perceive white snow; a photograph of the snow scene reveals that blue reflection. It is highly unlikely that if we each adjust our monitors by eye that the output from them will be the same.

If our computer monitors vary to the extent of those TVs then an image on my monitor will look entirely different when it is viewed on yours. However, if both monitors have been set up, or profiled, in line with an appropriate international standard, the image would look much the same on each.

Calibrating your monitor

Obtaining a suitable colour calibration profile on a computer monitor involves using a physical device called a colorimeter (eg: X-Rite ColorMunki Display c£110; X-Rite i1 Display Pro c£180) to measure the output of the monitor. When purchased, the colorimeter comes with an appropriate computer software package.

After the software has been installed on the computer, the colorimeter is attached to the computer by a USB cable and placed over the monitor so the screen's output can be read by the optical element in the colorimeter. When the software application is opened the computer will place the monitor into adjustment mode.

Before taking measurements and making the necessary adjustments to the computer video card and the monitor's Red, Green and Blue output, the software will invite you to set a number of parameters, including:

- the brightness level. Luminosity is measured in Candelas and an appropriate setting for photography is generally recognised to be between 80cd and 120cd. (I set my screens to 80cd)
- the white balance which is measured as colour temperature in Kelvins. (I set white balance to a temperature of 6500k)
- the gamma curve adjustment, which applies a curve to the data measured by the colorimeter. This ensures, for example, that the details in the blacks are

made fully apparent. A gamma adjustment factor of 2.2 is now virtually standard.

Once you have set your preferences, the profiling tools can proceed with the measurements and make

RGB numbers

Computer monitors use red, green and blue (RGB) guns to fire electrons at the monitor screen which then generates an integrated spectrum of millions of potential colours. Each of the three electron guns produces 256 shades of colour (0,1-255). Each of the millions of potential colour shades on the monitor has its colour recorded by its RGB numbers. For example, 258,170,187 is a pinky red colour.

the necessary adjustments. The computer receives data obtained by the colorimeter from the output of the screen about luminosity, colour and contrast. The RGB numbers for the black point and white point are measured, evaluated and appropriately changed. For example, the software will send an output signal for white; it will measure the response and then if necessary adjust the video card and the monitor guns to obtain the RGB numbers 255,255,255.

The device will also measure and make changes to a number of grey points, as well as the Red (255,0,0), Green (0,255,0), and Blue (0,0,255) colours. When successfully completed, you are invited to save the profile on your computer. And now, when you send your image file to others, using their profiled monitors, they will see what you see. It is advisable to repeat this process about every three or four weeks. Often the software package can be set to give you a reminder.

Profiling the print

If your computer monitor has been suitably profiled you will be confident that the RGB data represent the true colours of your image as seen on your monitor. But, how do you know that your printer will print those colours so that the print looks like the image on your monitor screen? To obtain this objective you need to tell the computer about the details of the specific photo paper, ink and printer that you will use.

Some photo papers are very white, enhanced by optical brighteners, and others are a little off-white, perhaps almost yellow: this affects the colours of your print. Matte papers absorb a lot of ink when compared to gloss papers, which have a hard, coated surface and are not very porous. Gloss papers show

high contrast and colour saturation when compared with matte papers. The ink from one manufacturer will interact with the photo paper differently to the ink made by another.

The computer needs to be told about these variables so that it can adjust the RGB numbers accordingly and accurately instruct the printer in order to reproduce the colours which you see on your monitor screen.

A print profile is generated by using the printer to print a photograph of a digital chart which contains a wide range of different colour patches. The relationships between the various colour patches and their RGB numbers have been previously measured by the chart manufacturer. Having obtained the photograph of the chart, a physical device called a spectrophotometer is placed on each of the individual colour patches on the photograph. The spectrophotometer then reads the RGB numbers from each of the colour patches.

The difference between the RGB numbers of the actual printed colour on the photograph and the RGB numbers of the desired printed colour can now be measured and evaluated. These data are then used to generate some additional computer software which will tell the computer the RGB number adjustments it needs to make to enable the printer to print accurate colour using that specific paper, ink and printer combination. A different print profile is required for each paper, ink and printer combination. However, as most of us use the same printer and ink to print our photographs, the only real variable is the paper.

Most printer manufacturers have already carried out this work on our behalf and provide for each model of printer free generic icc profiles for use with their range of ink/paper combinations. These icc profiles are pieces of software which are automatically installed on your computer when you install the printer driver. They can also be downloaded from the printer manufacturer's web site.

The manufacturer's installed profiles appear as a list within the printer driver dialogue box so that you can select the one appropriate for the photo paper you intend to use. Fig 1 on the next page shows the print dialogue box from the Epson 3880 printer and I have selected the printer profile for Epson Traditional Photo Paper (Epson Stylus Pro 3880_3885_3890 Traditional Photo Paper_PK_LC.icm). The image shown in the printer dialogue box will change when you choose your paper profile to reflect how the image will be printed by the printer on that paper.

Generic print profiles are usually sufficiently good to ensure faithful colour reproduction by the printer.

However, you can also obtain a bespoke profile for a specific paper, ink and your own individual printer. This involves printing an image of a colour chart provided by a colour management company of your choice. You send the resulting photograph back to the company which will then send you by email the print profile to be installed in your computer. This ensures an extremely accurate profile for your specific paper, ink and printer combination.

It is worth noting that photo paper companies such as Permajet also provide, via their websites, free generic icc profiles for their papers for use with all the main photo printers and inks.

Of course, you can buy your own spectrophotometer (which will also perform as an excellent colorimeter) and carry out this work yourself. However, the appropriate kit is expensive (eg: X-Rite i1Photo Pro2 c£1400).

Monitor image compared to the print

If both your computer monitor and your print are suitably profiled, your printed image will look very similar to the image you see on your monitor: very similar, but not the same.

There are inescapable, physical differences between printed images and projected images. We see the projected image via light coming directly from

the screen into our eyes and the colours are bright and vibrant. Images on a monitor benefit if viewed in a dark room. We see printed images via indirect light, where the light rays hitting the printed paper are reflected into our eyes. Printed images need to be viewed in daylight rather than a darkened room. Because of these physical differences, compared to monitor images, printed images will always appear relatively flat and dull.

However, computer programmes such as Adobe Photoshop enable the monitor image to be 'soft-proofed' such that the computer emulates how the image will appear in print with one of the specific print profiles which have been installed on your computer. When you soft-proof the image on your monitor be aware that your image will perform become less punchy and less vibrant.

Using colour profiles ensures that your image will be seen by others as you want it to be seen on both a profiled monitor screen and in print. If you use a colour-profiled work flow, when you pick up your photograph after it has emerged from the printer and you hold it up to the daylight, it will compare very favourably with the soft-proofed image that you see on your computer monitor. And that is very gratifying: it also saves a lot of wasted paper and very expensive ink!

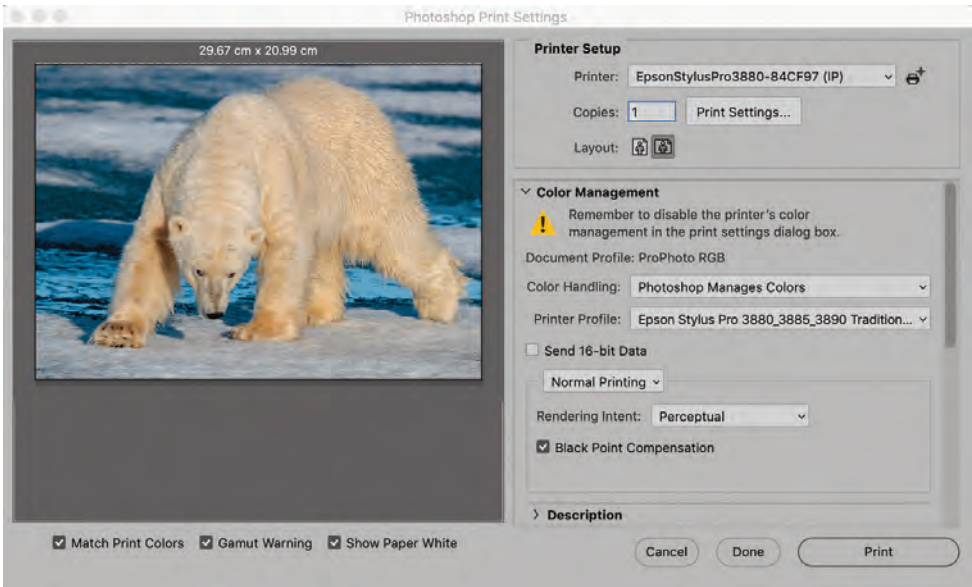


Fig 1. Epson 3880 printer driver dialogue box showing the print profile

NATURE GROUP FIELD MEETINGS – YOUR HELP NEEDED

Ann Miles FRPS- Programme Co-ordinator

I am starting my tenure as Programme Coordinator for the Group with a request for more Members to share their Nature outings with other Members. The key to enjoying Nature photography is to get out there and learn and practise techniques. This can be greatly helped by sharing the experience. You do not have to be an expert to run an outing – just have an area that you know well enough to share with other Members. I have run several outings for the Group over recent years and find it an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Recent Outings

2019 has started well with outings to Welney Wildfowl Trust and Wicken Fen on a weekend blessed with sunny and unseasonably warm weather. James couldn't make the Sunday as he had another meeting to attend, so we met him on the Friday afternoon at Wicken hopefully to photograph the Short-Eared Owls that traditionally winter there and we were not disappointed with a pair entertaining us for nearly an hour as the light faded. This included a 10-minute pose on a close fence post. On Saturday about a dozen people met at Welney Wildfowl Trust in Norfolk. The Ouse Washes, of which Welney Wetland Centre Reserve is part, host around 100,000 wildfowl and waders in winter including large numbers of Whooper Swans, which visit the centre to be fed three times in the day and to roost. Julia negotiated a good deal for the group to use the basement hide so we had excellent eye-level views of the birds. The sunset fly-in was a bit disappointing but otherwise an excellent day with plenty to see and photograph.

On Sunday a small party of 6 explored Wicken Fen from the Burwell Fen end, visiting various hides and being entertained by displaying Reed Buntings and Stonechat before returning to the SEO site for another good display by the Owls.



Three photographs taken at recent field meetings

Short-eared Owl by Di Jackson
Whooper pair by Julia Andrews
Reed Bunting by Ann Miles

Future Outings

Two outings are planned for May to Martin Downs, Hampshire (22nd May) for Orchids and insects, Upton Woods, Worcs, (29th May) for a variety of birds, one in June (2nd) to Strumpshaw Fen, Norfolk, for Swallowtail Butterflies and Dragonflies and one in July (28th) to Sharpenhoe Clappers, Beds, for Butterflies etc. In August, we plan to hold a Macro Workshop in East Anglia region. There are two Residential Weekends in August and October – these are always popular and sell out. This year we have the first of what we hope will be a series of Video Workshops on September 15th.

All these events are listed on the Nature Group Website. It is preferred that you book a place this way so we have an idea of numbers and full contact details.

Please if there are no meetings close to you, then think about running one – lots of advice and help will be given with what you need to do – just email annmiles70@gmail.com with your suggestions.



RPS Nature Group

Minutes of the 43rd AGM – 6th April 2019

The 43rd Annual General Meeting of the RPS Nature Group was held on Saturday 6th April 2019 at Smethwick Photographic Society starting at 1345hrs. In the absence of Kevin Elsby FRPS, it was chaired by the Vice Chairman, David O'Neill LRPS and attended by 46 Members.

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for Absence had been received from: Margaret Beardmore, Dickie Duckett, Moira Ellice, Kevin Elsby, Gianpiero Ferrari, Gordon Follows, John Jones, Margery Maskell, Jean Robson and Julia Wainwright.

Minutes of the 42nd AGM 2018:

These had been published in the Summer 2018 issue of *The Iris* (No. 131).

There were no corrections to the minutes and it was proposed by Ralph Snook and seconded by Thomas Hanahoe that the minutes be approved.

Matters Arising:

None.

Chairman's Report:

In his absence, Kevin Elsby had provided the following written report, which was read out by David O'Neill:

Welcome to the AGM of the Nature Group for 2019.

Today I hand over the reins of Nature Group Chairman to Thomas Hanahoe. It has been a privilege and an honour to be your Chairman over the last two years.

I am sorry, however, that I cannot be with you today, but unfortunately, I had another previous engagement, in Costa Rica (sorry, I am not trying to rub it in) before the date for the AGM was set.

I hope you enjoy the talks from our speakers – they have been selected for their skill and expertise both with a camera and as their ability to entertain an audience and I feel sure you will have a great day.

As it is, I was lucky enough to have been on the selection panel for the Exhibition this year, and my colleagues on the day and I were all highly impressed with the standard of images we saw, in all categories. It was gratifying to see an increase in the entrants this year, and I hope that we can continue in this vein year on year. Of course, one of the drawbacks of this is

that with every increase in entrants, it may reduce your individual chances of having your images accepted for the Exhibition and winning an award.

The membership of the Group has remained pretty stable over the last couple of years and again, as a Group we need to at least maintain the number of Members or increase them.

Over my two years tenure in the post of Chairman I have been ably assisted by a great Committee and would like to place on record today my grateful thanks for all their help. I feel sure that under Thom's leadership the Group will continue to develop from strength to strength. The change of Editor of *The Iris* went smoothly and the introduction of the electronic version has also been very successful.

In concluding I would like to wish you all a very enjoyable day and look forward to seeing you at future meetings.

Treasurer's Report:

RPS Special Interest Group (SIG) and Regional finance was discussed at the SIGs Standing Committee Meeting on 14th July 2018 and Derek Trendell (RPS Trustee and Honorary Treasurer) put forward a proposal that financial administration should be organised centrally by RPS HQ.

Regions and SIGs would retain authority over their budgets and spending, but the banking administration work would be done at RPS HQ.

Derek also recommended that the reserves of each group should be approximately 3 - 6 months operational costs. Our Nature Group reserves are closer to 3 years.

There is a trial underway with two Regions to pilot this system and we are unofficially being handled in the same way because we do not have a permanent Treasurer.

I suspect it may stay this way, which means as Treasurer I document Income and Expenditure, but have no access to the Bank Account. Personally, I do not have a problem with this as the Treasurer's role becomes an administration task without the burden of financial responsibilities.

The down side is that we can only properly recognise Income from Bank Statements, which are about 6 weeks behind. For example, February Income will show in the March Bank Statement that we will receive in the 2nd week of April.

The Balance Sheet (attached at the end of these Minutes) is an overall summary of Income and Expenditure for the year 2018.

There followed discussion on the Group's relatively large financial reserves and the following points were raised:

1. How can the Group's financial reserves be used to benefit Group Members?

Suggestions made included:

- first year free membership for New Members
- subsidised Workshops, Field Meetings and two Residential Weekends a year
- a subsidised Weekend Conference
- creation of a web based education package that would attract Younger Members
- encourage Younger Members to attend our Exhibition – this could trigger their interest in Nature Photography
- work with the Field Studies Council to develop a course for young nature photographers
- creation of a monthly competition (perhaps with sponsorship) with a public vote on say Facebook to select the winner
- involvement with the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme

Residential Weekends: James Foad pointed out that there will be two Residential Weekends in 2019.

Web Based Education Package: David O'Neill said that the RPS was keen to grow the educational side of the organisation by liaison with Universities, etc. Ralph Snook said that we must not underestimate the amount of work required to produce such a package. Commissioning a University to produce one was suggested.

Exhibition: David O'Neill said that the Group was keen to get the Exhibition into more venues. The one at the Apex in Bury St Edmunds had been well received.

It was suggested that getting the Exhibition into places such as RSPB Reserve Centres and Wildlife Parks where young people go would help to encourage their interest in nature photography.

David O'Neill said that at present the Exhibition space in the new RPS HQ in Bristol is not available to SIGs for their exhibitions. The RPS regards this space as being for high profile exhibitions that will bring revenue into the Society. Both the SIGs and RPS Regions are working to try and change this present RPS policy.

It was thought that putting the Exhibition on-line could be difficult as the Group does not have direct

access to a web platform. Ralph Snook thought that putting the Exhibition on-line would probably not have a great impact on the attendance at the Exhibitions.

David O'Neill said that through the SIG Committee, the RPS was planning to book venues throughout the country that could be used by the SIGs and Regions to have joint meetings and which could include an Exhibition.

2. Is there a danger that RPS HQ could take some of the Group's reserves on the basis that they are currently excessive?

It was also pointed out that the RPS is a Registered Charity and the Charities Commission could intervene if it becomes aware of excessive reserves. The Treasurer said that at present there was no indication that the RPS would take some of the Group's reserves, which from the Charities Commission point of view were only a small part of the overall RPS finances.

Brian Ferry said that as a Registered Charity we were not allowed to spend our reserves for the direct benefit of our Members.

Conclusion: in conclusion, David O'Neill said that the Committee would actively look at ways of using the Group's reserves for the benefit of Group Members and to encourage more young people to take up nature photography.

Secretary's Report:

There have been two well attended Committee Meetings held at Smethwick since the last AGM. Going forward, the Committee will continue to have two face to face meetings a year, but I am going to look for a venue that is more central to where Committee Members live. Also we plan to trial video meetings. The AGM will remain here at Smethwick as it is central and provides an excellent venue for the Exhibition.

There have been no changes to the Committee during the year. We still do not have a full-time Treasurer and so David O'Neill has continued to act as both Vice Chairman and Honorary Treasurer. Ralph Snook, in addition to being Exhibition Secretary, also acts as Webmaster.

The Nature Group Committee is elected to serve for two years and the present Committee comes to the end of its term of office at this 2019 AGM. Four Committee Members: Gordon Follows, John Jones, Barbara Lawton and Richard Revels are all standing down from the Committee. I would like to thank them all very much for their excellent help and

support over the last two years while I have been Secretary.

I act as Membership Secretary in that I monitor the number of Members in the Group, send a welcome letter and a copy of the current issue of The Iris to each New Member and I e-mail a questionnaire to those leaving asking them their reason for leaving.

The current membership of the RPS Nature Group from the RPS website is 897 and we are the third largest SIG behind Digital Imaging and Visual Arts. At the time of last year's AGM the membership was 980 and so there has been a reduction of 83 Members during the year.

Why the decrease in membership numbers? At last year's AGM I reported that the RPS ended central funding of First Year Free Membership of a SIG as of the 31st December 2017. After careful analysis we concluded that it was not cost effective for the Group to continue with First Year Free Membership funded from Group funds. This was agreed by the Committee and Free Membership ceased at the start of 2018. So up until the end of 2018, there was a continual loss of Free Group Members as a proportion of those who joined in 2017 did not take up paid membership.

I stated last year that I expected the Group Membership to decrease to somewhere between 850 and 900 Members by the end of 2018. Overall the decrease in membership is if anything less than I expected.

There is now the normal turnover of Nature Photographers joining the group and those of more advancing years ceasing to be Members. Difficult to quantify as the numbers do vary considerably from month to month, but on average it is about twelve Members per month.

I get very few complaints about the Nature Group from those who reply to my questionnaire asking them why they left the Group. Some have simply left the RPS due to the high cost of membership, but some do complain about the lack of Nature Group events close to where they live. Something that I believe we need to address.

Finally, I believe that the aim of the Group is to inspire and educate its Members into taking better images of the natural world and so we must organise more events for Members to get together and develop their nature photography. So please think about whether you could organise an event that would be of interest to Nature Group Members – you'll learn a lot from it as well – if you have any ideas then please come and talk to the Committee about it – we are here to help.

Committee for 2019 - 2021

Like many Clubs and Societies, the Nature Group is finding it increasingly difficult to find willing volunteers to serve on the Committee. I am pleased to say that with two notable exceptions that the Group does have a complete Committee for the next two years; that is from this present AGM to the 2021 AGM. The exceptions being the Group still needs to recruit a full-time Treasurer and a full-time Webmaster.

Four Committee Members: Gordon Follows, John Jones, Barbara Lawton and Richard Revels are all standing down from the Committee.

Four replacements have been nominated and agreed to join the Committee: Ann Miles, Julia Andrew, James Foad and Julia Wainwright. No Committee positions are being contested and therefore no elections will be required.

The Committee for 2019 – 2021 will be as follows

Chairman:	Thomas Hanahoe FRPS
Vice Chairman:	David O'Neill LRPS
Honorary Secretary:	Duncan Locke LRPS
Honorary Treasurer:	David O'Neill LRPS (acting)
SIG Group Representative:	David O'Neill LRPS
Immediate Past Chairman:	Kevin Elsby FRPS
Exhibition Secretary:	Ralph Snook ARPS
Programme Coordinator:	Ann Miles FRPS
Editor of The Iris:	Gerald Griffin ARPS
Editor of the eNews:	Dawn Osborn FRPS
Webmaster:	Ralph Snook ARPS (acting)
Committee Members:	Julia Andrew LRPS James Foad LRPS Stan Saunders ARPS Julia Wainwright ARPS

Sonja Thompson proposed and Trevor Davenport seconded that the new Committee be elected and it was agreed with none against.

Any Other Business:

None.

Date and Venue of the 44th AGM 2019:

The 44th Annual General Meeting of the RPS Nature Group will be held at Smethwick Photographic Society, The Old Schoolhouse, Oldbury, B69 2AS on Saturday 4th April 2020.

Treasurers Report

for the Year Ended 31st December 2018

Cash Book Summary

Current Account Balance:	31st Dec. 2017	£19,593.14
Income for 12 Months to 31st Dec:		£15,555.43
Expenditure for 12 Months to 31st Dec:		(£9,576.44)
Closing Balance:	31st Dec. 2018	£25,572.13
Bank Account Balance:	31st Dec. 2018	£25,572.13

Income and Expenditure Summary

	Income:	Expenditure:
Members' Subscriptions:	£12,128.53	
Life Members' Subscriptions:	£686.00	
Deposits for 2019 Event:	£400.00	
Exhibition:	£1,144.00	£1,372.49
Chairman's Day:	£830.83	£814.78
Printing & Distribution (The Iris):		£4,717.95
Travel, Room Hire AGM/Committee:		£2,195.84
Admin. and Other:		£475.38
Other Income:	£366.07	
Totals:	£15,555.43	£ 9,576.44

Notes

1. Exhibition Expenses includes unplanned costs of £360 to hire the Apex, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk for the current Nature Group Exhibition. This is a current exhibition that is still open.
2. Income includes £400 in deposits for our 2019 Event at the Field Studies Centre.
3. Printing and Distribution Costs only covers 2 editions, so we expect another invoice of about £2400.

Summary

We have an increase of income over expenditure of £5,978.99 and even after adjusting for Notes 2 and 3 this remains a healthy increase of £3,178.99.

Book Review

BEYOND EXTREME CLOSE-UP PHOTOGRAPHY

BY JULIAN CREMONA

Julian's previous book, 'Extreme Close-Up Photography and Focus Stacking' was a mine of useful information and offered a range of low-cost solutions to problems in addition to information on high-end equipment.

This new book offers an insight into, and explores the inspiration found in, exploring the world of high magnification and photomicrography. Although developing skills in these fields demands a degree of dedication and a fair amount of time, the images which can be produced can be extraordinarily beautiful, have a real 'wow' factor and may provide valuable information.

In the first chapter, the author asks 'What is magnification?' and includes a very useful table of magnification and field of view, before discussing problems encountered when working at high magnification, and solutions to them. Then follows a chapter discussing the suitability of different camera types and use of live view.

Next comes 'Techniques to go Beyond Macro', covering a wide range of lenses including relatively cheap enlarger lenses, adaptors, bellows and focusing rails (manual and automated). If like me you have a 'junk box' accumulated over the years then you may be surprised to discover how much useful kit you have!

'An introduction to Microscopes' outlining different types and techniques for photomicrography, is followed by 'Lighting Extreme Close-ups' and 'Support and Preparation' which gives invaluable advice not only about camera supports but also about preparing specimens for photography.

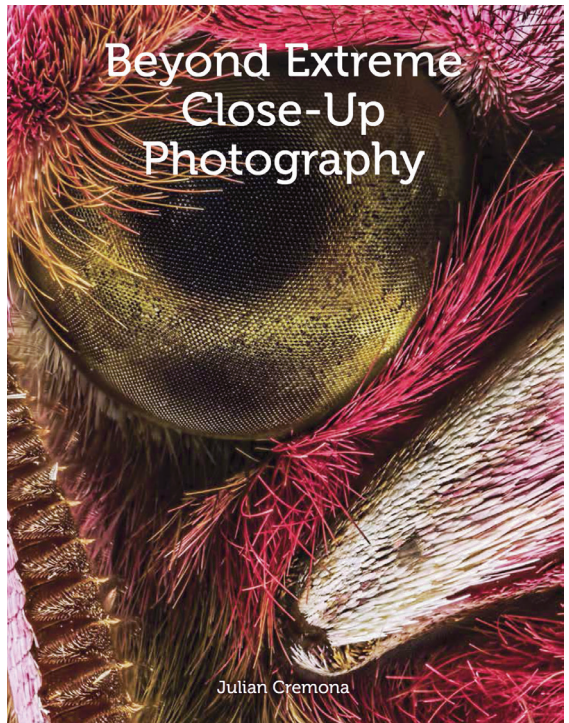
Chapter 7, 'Focus Stacking', explores and explains problems encountered and solutions to them, and looks at various software and hardware options for stacking. Next the author looks at inspiration for extreme closeups and finally gives an invaluable list of

references and further reading.

Throughout the book, equipment and the results obtained are very well illustrated – but images in a book cannot really convey the wonder of a high definition large print or an image projected on a large screen (or, as in my experience, the audience reaction to these!).

I have enjoyed reading this book and it has enhanced my understanding and helped me to improve the quality of my high magnification images of both plant and animal details. Strongly recommended.

John Bebbington, April 2019.



RPS Nature Group Residential Weekend 2019

Margam Discovery Centre

Margam Park, Port Talbot, South Wales, SA13 2UA

18th - 21st October 2019

Leader: James Foad LRPS



This re-introduction of an Autumn Residential weekend is hoped to be as successful as the highly supported summer Residential weekend.

The cost is £170.25 single room occupancy / £147.75 shared room, per person for three nights. Prices include full board, Packed Lunch, accommodation and VAT at 20%. All rooms are en-suite.

We will have the use of the centre's 16 seater mini bus for which there will be a small extra charge per mile.

A deposit of £85.00 by cheque made payable to Field Studies Council Ltd, and sent to the organiser within fourteen days of booking will be required to secure your place. If the deposit is not paid within this time and a waiting list is in operation there is a risk of losing the place. Deposits are non-returnable unless there is anyone on the waiting list who can take your place.

Main subjects of interest: Deer and Deer rutting, Fungi, autumn colours and water falls.

For further details and to book please contact: James Foad LRPS

Phone: 07834 – 810430 Email: jamesfoadlrps@inbox.com

Emails must have in the Subject box: RPS, NG Autumn Residential Weekend 2019

Cheques made payable to: Field Studies Council Ltd should be sent to:

Mr J.C. Foad, LRPS, 24B Queens Road, Ramsgate, Kent. CT11 8DZ

This Weekend may not be suitable for disabled and members with walking difficulties as there will be some walking on steep, uneven and slippery ground to one of the water falls we will be visiting.