



Lizard Orchid

Dawn Osborn FRPS

Common Spotted Orchid

Dawn Osborn FRPS

## Midsummer

June and July are great times to photograph all manner of wildflowers, especially members of the Orchid family. We have over 50 species of native orchid species growing wild in Britain and Ireland. Some, like the Lizard Orchid, are exotic and rare, while others such as the Common Spotted Orchid are widespread and show a wide range of colouration.

## Contents

- 2 Chairman's Day Announcement**
- 3 June Field Meeting**  
Ainsdale Dunes 09.06.18
- 4 Autumn Ladies Tresses -**  
Richard Revels FRPS
- 5 Nature Photography  
Technique Workshop  
Report**
- 7 Dates for your diaries**  
Exhibitions open for  
Nature Entries
- For Sale**
- 8 Information**  
Publication details  
Committee Members

Welcome to the third issue of the Nature Group eNews. eNews is e-mailed to all Nature Group members whose e-mail address is registered with RPS Membership Department. It is also available as a download from the 'Nature Group Members' area' of the RPS website.

The aim of 'eNews' is to improve communication within the group, allowing members to share items of interest with their fellow members. It will only be successful if members give it their full support and share information - such as short reviews of books or kit you have acquired, photo kit you have for sale and field meetings arranged at short notice. Think about it - anything that would be of interest to you as a nature photographer is probably of interest to your fellow Nature Group members.

eNews will appear in your 'in-box' during the months of September, February and May/June - roughly between publications of The Iris.

Items of interest are required for the September issue. You may contact me by clicking on the following e-mail address: [naturegroup\\_enews\\_editor@btinternet.com](mailto:naturegroup_enews_editor@btinternet.com)

I look forward to hearing from you soon.



eNews Editor

# Announcements

RPS Nature Group

## Chairman's Day

Saturday 15th September 2018

Smethwick Photographic Society  
The Old Schoolhouse, Churchbridge, Oldbury,  
West Midlands, B69 2AS

*(for directions see below)*

### Programme:

- 10.00hrs** Doors open, tea and coffee available
- 10.30hrs** Welcome and introduction
- 10.35hrs** 'In Search of Dragons & Damsels - the role of the camera over 25 years of watching Odonata' - Steve Cham, Dragonfly expert and author.
- 11.40hrs** Short break
- 11.55hrs** David Osborn FRPS, Professional Wildlife Photographer and Chairman of the RPS Nature Distinctions Panel.
- 13.00hrs** Break for lunch
- 13.45hrs** Austin Thomas, Wildlife Photographer
- 14.50hrs** Short break
- 15.10hrs** 'Wildlife in Costa Rica' - Kevin Elsby FRPS, Chairman of the RPS Nature Group.
- 16.00hrs** Close

**Throughout the day there will be prints on display of recently successful Associate and Fellowship Distinction panels by Nature Group members.**

**Please bring your own packed lunch - lunch will not be available.**

**There is a dining area. Tea, coffee and drinks will be available at the bar.**

**Cost: £10 per ticket for RPS Members. £12.50 for non-members**

**The maximum number of tickets available is 80 so BOOK NOW to avoid disappointment.**

To obtain your ticket: send your cheque, payable to RPS Nature Group, plus a stamped, self addressed envelope to: Duncan Locke LRPS, Park Cottage, 6 Old Road North, Kempsey, Worcester, WR5 3JZ or download a Booking Form from the RPS website: <http://www.rps.org/special-interest-groups/nature/events>

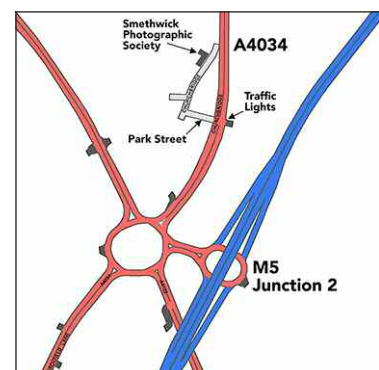
### Directions:

From Junction 2 of the M5 follow the signs for the A4034 north towards West Bromwich. Once on the A4034 stay in the left hand lane and after about 1/3 mile turn left at the first set of traffic lights into Park Street. At the end of Park Street turn right into Churchbridge (cul-de-sac). The Old Schoolhouse is the last but one building on the left.

If you use SatNav use postcode: B69 2AS

Google Maps Coordinates: 52.497771, -2.019776

Please note that currently there are major road works between Junctions 1 and 2 of the M5 plus delays at M5 Junction 4a northbound. Please allow extra time for your journey to Smethwick if you are using the M5.



# Field Meeting Reminder

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## Ainsdale Dunes, Ainsdale-on-Sea, nr. Southport, Lancashire

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**Date:** Saturday, June 9th, 2018  
**Time:** 10:00 am.  
**Location:** The Ainsdale Discovery Centre,  
The Promenade, Shore Road,  
Ainsdale-on-Sea,  
Nr Southport, PR8 2QB

**Main subjects of interest:** Orchids and other dune flora, amphibians, reptiles and rare insects etc.

**Leader:** Trevor Davenport ARPS  
Tel: 01704 870284  
Mobile: 07831 643844  
E-mail: trevor43davenport@gmail.com

Dr. Phil Smith, MBE, has kindly agreed to join us again on this field meeting; Phil is a noted expert on the Sefton Coast and author of *'The Sands of Time'* and *'The Sands of Time Revisited'*

### Additional Information:

The sand-dunes of the Sefton Coast provide the largest sand-dune complex in England, covering an area of approximately 2100 ha. It is a fascinating and ever-changing habitat offering many photographic opportunities throughout the seasons; however, early summer is usually a period when the dunes are richly rewarding for both botanic and entomological subjects. This year we have timed the meeting for early summer orchids and insects. These are always dependent upon seasonal weather; (last year was exceptionally dry but so far we have had a wet winter with plentiful rain). Unless we have a very dry period from now on we should find Bee Orchids and varieties of Marsh Orchids with hybrids. There are many other botanic specialties to be found in the dunes and on the 'Green Beach' at this time of the year. If the day is warm we should find the Northern Dune Tiger-beetle - a superbly photogenic insect; and there should be a plentiful supply of early butterflies and dragonflies. The frontal dunes and the 'Green Beach' are also well known for sightings of migratory birds and there may be some latecomers passing through. The area is also noted for having two increasingly rare species: the Sand Lizard and the Natterjack Toad. These are not easy to locate, especially the Sand Lizard, but we will do some prior research into suitable locations. In addition to the flora and fauna the Sefton Coast is itself very photogenic with sand, sea and dune landscape opportunities. The dunes are always changing, physically and with both subtle and dramatic lighting, and there are locations where 'sand blow' has scoured large 'Devil Holes' further down the coast.

There is plentiful accommodation in the nearby seaside resort of Southport.

This is a popular field trip with a maximum number of fifteen so early booking is important.

**Items to bring:** There are very few natural hazards but the area is exposed so light warm clothing and waterproofs are ideal in case of rain.  
Stout shoes or wellingtons are required.  
There are no charges but a packed lunch and something to drink is advisable.

## Bedfordshire's Autumn Ladies-tresses Orchids.

by Richard Revels FRPS



*Autumn Ladies-tresses - Spiranthes spiralis*  
by Richard Revels FRPS

The Autumn Ladies Tresses *Spiranthes spiralis* is Britain's latest flowering orchid, usually coming into bloom from about mid-August to late September, depending upon seasonal weather conditions.

This small orchid is widespread and common in some places south of the Thames, with large numbers in some locations in Hampshire and Dorset. North of the Thames it has become very restricted, having died out from most of its former sites during the past 100 years. Bedfordshire seems to have the last remaining site for this plant on the Chiltern Hills that range from the Thames near Reading and Henley in the south to Dunstable and Hitchin in the north.

The Bedfordshire site is on Knocking Hoe NNR and it has been studied and monitored since Terry Wells started detailed recording there as part of his work back in 1962, making it the world's 2nd longest continually monitored orchid site. I am pleased to be able to report that the population of Autumn Ladies Tresses there is in good numbers, with most years between 300 and 1300 flowering plants being recorded.

Should any Nature Group members wish to visit this site, they can do so as it has open access. The area on the reserve where these orchids occur is a mile or so away from any car parking areas, and if they would like to accompany me on one of my visits there during the flowering season, I will be pleased to take them there.

It would be best to contact me first, as the timing of flowering varies considerably from year to year. Some years flowering has hardly started at the end of August, whilst other years it is about over by the first few days of September.

Rabbits have many burrows on the reserve so there is a danger of injury, and great care must be taken when visiting the reserve.

My e-mail address is: [richard.revels@talktalk.net](mailto:richard.revels@talktalk.net)

# Report

## The Nature Photography Technique Workshop – 25th November, 2017.

The Nature Photography Technique Workshop held at The Old Schoolhouse, Oldbury, on 25th November 2017 and attended by 32 people. The workshop provided an insight into four different aspects of nature photography and techniques required.

The day opened with an excellent presentation given by Charles Erb, who gave us an insight into underwater photography, which, for many of us, was an entirely new experience. Not only did Charles, talk about techniques and equipment he uses, but he also showed us some stunning images of marine life around our coasts.

A talk about close up photography, by John Bebbington was also very well received. Not only did we see some excellent images, but also John talked eloquently about the equipment he uses and the techniques required to produce pictures such as these.

Since exhibitions are now accepting focus-stacked images, many of us are now investigating the techniques and software required to produce such pictures. To help us through this process, Duncan Locke gave us an excellent insight into his experiences of focus-stacking explaining about the different programs, which are available to us, and how the process actually works.

The day finished with a talk about producing short video sequences and Paul Cutland gave this presentation. It soon became very apparent that it was far more complex than we first imagined. Not only were we given an insight into the different camera set-ups we can use, but also the problems we can encounter when the sequence is taken over a period of time and not in one session, and the different software that is required to produce the video.

During the intervals all the speakers, were very willing to answer our individual queries and gave us the opportunity to look at their camera gear more closely.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our speakers for an excellent day, to Smethwick Photographic Society for hosting the occasion and to my team of helpers behind the scenes who helped the day to run smoothly.



Above: Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*) male & female catkins (1)  
Below: Death's Head Hawk-moth (*Acherontia atropos*) larva early 5th instar



## Nature Photography Techniques Workshop continued ... ..

One of the criticisms we receive about the RPS and the Special Interest Groups, is the lack of events around different parts of the country for members to participate in. The workshop was very successful, but we need to be able to engage with more of our members. The response to the appeal for Field Meetings has once again been particularly disappointing. Many of us have favourite places we like to visit for our pictures and which are of particular interest to that location. Why not share them with your fellow Nature Group members?

I have been a member of the Nature Group since the mid 1980s and derived a great deal of benefit and enjoyment from meeting up with other members and visiting new sites in order to see and photograph subjects I had previously not had the opportunity of photographing. Not only did these Field Meetings provide photographic opportunities but also offered the opportunity to exchange ideas with fellow members and were a wonderful social occasion too.

I know that the weather is the unpredictable factor for field meetings, but it is also very discouraging when volunteers offer to run field meetings and have no one turn up.

There is still time to volunteer to host a Field Meeting this year. as we now have a variety of ways in which we can circulate information to our members. It is not too late for you to send details of field meetings for the Summer and Autumn.

Thank you to all who have already volunteered to run Field Meetings. It is very much appreciated.



Above: *Crab spider (Xysticus sp)*  
*w Syrretta pipiens prey*  
© Duncan Locke LRPS

Below left: *Garden Bumblebee (Bombus hortorum)*  
*Queen nectaring on Bluebell*  
© John Bebbington FRPS

Below centre: *Six-spot Burnet (Zygaena filipendulae)*  
*newly-emerged male*  
© John Bebbington FRPS

Below right: *Monkey Orchid*  
© Duncan Locke LRPS



## Dates for your diary

### Entries Invited

*The following National and International Exhibitions with Nature sections are now open for entries:*

#### 69th Midland Salon

Prints & Projected Images  
www.midland-salon.com  
Entries close 27th June 2018

#### Winchester National Exhibition

Digital Projected Images  
www.winphotosoc.co.uk  
Entries close 30th June 2018

#### sRGB Photo Group - Print Celebration

Printed Images  
www.srgbphotogroup.co.uk  
Entries close 15th July 2018

#### South Devon International Salon 2018

Projected Digital Images  
www.newtonabbot-photoclub.org.uk  
Entries close 15th July 2018

#### Beyond Group National Exhibition

Digital Projected Images  
www.beyondgroup.org.uk  
Entries close 29th July 2018

#### f2 Sociedad Circuito 2018

Digital Projected Images  
www.f2sociedadfotografica.com  
Entries close 16th August 2018

#### 40th Welsh International Salon of Photography

Prints and Projected Images  
www.thewpf.co.uk  
Entries close 26th August 2018

#### Dingwall National Projected Image Exhibition

Digital Projected images  
www.dingwallcameraclub.com  
Entries close September 2018

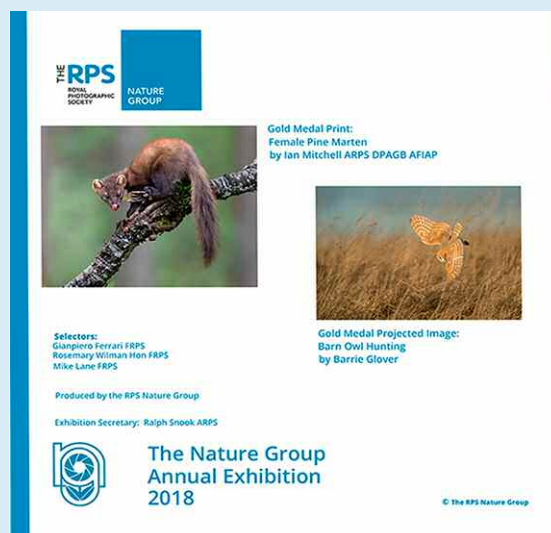
## For Sale

**Pentax LX camera with 50mm f1.7 lens  
filter and ERC case  
Pentax 100mm Macro f4 lens with case & filter**

All in VG condition and original boxes - £385  
For more information contact Tony Seager ARPS  
Tel: 01225 706533



## The Nature Group Annual Exhibition DVD 2018



**A DVD containing all of the accepted images from the 2018 Exhibition is now available.**

**Order online from the RPS Shop.**

**Priced at only £10.**

**See the RPS website for more details.**

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Digitally captured photographic images should be supplied as flattened 8bit sRGB tif or jpg files, 6" x 4" at 300 pixels per inch. Please do not e-mail larger images.

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## Design & layout

by Dawn Osborn FRPS

## Nature Group Committee

### Officers:

**Chairman: Kevin Elsby FRPS**  
Aylsham, Norfolk,  
Tel: 01263-732839 E-mail: [wildlife@greenbee.net](mailto:wildlife@greenbee.net)

**Secretary: Duncan Locke LRPS**  
Kempsey, Worcester. WR5 3JZ  
E-mail: [duncan.locke@btinternet.com](mailto:duncan.locke@btinternet.com)

**Acting Treasurer: David O'Neill LRPS**  
Reading, RG1 6DG,  
E-mail: [david.oneill@wildhorizons.uk.com](mailto:david.oneill@wildhorizons.uk.com)

**Vice Chairman: David O'Neill LRPS**  
Reading, RG1 6DG,  
E-mail: [david.oneill@wildhorizons.uk.com](mailto:david.oneill@wildhorizons.uk.com)

**Immediate Past Chairman: Richard Revels FRPS**  
Biggleswade, Beds. SG18 8EE  
Tel: 01767 313065 E-mail:  
[richard.revels@talktalk.net](mailto:richard.revels@talktalk.net)

### Committee Members:

**Editor of The Iris: Gerald Griffin ARPS**  
Penkridge, Staffordshire.  
E-mail: [iris\\_editor@griff45.com](mailto:iris_editor@griff45.com)

**eNewsletter Editor: Dawn Osborn FRPS**  
Dereham, Norfolk.  
E-mail: [naturegroup\\_eneews\\_editor@btinternet.com](mailto:naturegroup_eneews_editor@btinternet.com)

**Exhibition Secretary: Ralph Snook ARPS**  
Bristol BS32 4EJ  
E-mail: [rpsngexsec@btinternet.com](mailto:rpsngexsec@btinternet.com)

**NG Rep to Advisory Panel: David O'Neill LRPS**  
Reading, Berkshire, RG1 6DG  
E-mail: [david.oneill@wildhorizons.uk.com](mailto:david.oneill@wildhorizons.uk.com)

**Programme Co-ordinator: Barbara Lawton FRPS**  
Wolverhampton, West Midlands, WV9 5QG  
E-mail: [barbara.lawton@talktalk.net](mailto:barbara.lawton@talktalk.net)

**Webmaster: Ralph Snook ARPS**  
Bristol BS32 4EJ  
E-mail: [rpsngexsec@btinternet.com](mailto:rpsngexsec@btinternet.com)

**John Jones ARPS**  
Kegworth, Derby, DE74 2FW  
Tel: 01509 672125

**Gordon Follows ARPS**  
Holt, Norfolk  
E-mail: [gordonfollows@btinternet.com](mailto:gordonfollows@btinternet.com)

**Thomas Hanahoe FRPS**  
Biggleswade, SG18 0AN  
[t.hanahoe@ntlworld.com](mailto:t.hanahoe@ntlworld.com)

**Stan Saunders ARPS**  
Sandy, SG19 3JF  
E-mail: [stan.saunders2@btopenworld.com](mailto:stan.saunders2@btopenworld.com)

### Ex officio Committee members:

President of the Society;  
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 opposite.

## The Iris: Publication Dates

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Winter	Copy deadline 31st August Published early November.

All contributions should be submitted to the Editor. Items covering any aspect of nature photography and/or natural history are welcomed, including reviews on equipment and relevant books. The Editor can be contacted at: [iris\\_editor@btinternet.com](mailto:iris_editor@btinternet.com)



THE RPS, FENTON HOUSE, 122 WELLS ROAD, BATH BA2 3AH, UK  
t +44(0)1225 325733 [www.rps.org](http://www.rps.org) [reception@rps.org](mailto:reception@rps.org)

follow us [twitter.com/The\\_RPS](https://twitter.com/The_RPS) like us [facebook.com/royalphotographicsociety](https://facebook.com/royalphotographicsociety)  
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