



THE IRIS

Issue No. 84 Winter 2002

MAGAZINE OF THE NATURE GROUP OF THE RPS



RPS 

THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



Photo by Richard Revels FRPS - 'Hornet flying to nest'
from his First Place set in The Iris Five slide competition.



Photo by Richard Revels FRPS - 'Great Crested Newt - male'.
from his First Place set in The Iris Five slide competition.

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Front Cover Photo: “Rasta” a distinctive Japanese Snow Monkey (*Macaca fuscata*) in hot springs at Jigokudani Spa in the Japanese Alps.
by Michael Gore FRPS.

Back Cover Photo: ‘Crane portrait’ (*Grus grus*) by Charles Brown ARPS.

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EDITORIAL

Biannual Elections ... and whither the Nature Group? At first reading this may seem a little premature, after all our AGM is not until 26th April 2003 and there will be another issue of *The Iris* before then. When, however, you have read the

notice on page 7 you will understand why I am making my observations now.

The introduction of a postal ballot is one I fully support, not only because it enfranchises every member, but also because it may finally put an end to misconceptions previously expressed by some members. *Any benefit, however, will only be obtained if members fully participate, firstly in the nomination process and later by voting.*

Let us look at the nomination process. I am curious as to the basis on which members will decide whom they wish to nominate, also how someone will decide whether they wish to be nominated.

Consider; person X may be the salt of the earth, a first rate photographer, but will they be a good administrator, or are they in a position to effectively promote the Nature Group? Do you feel that someone, who has previously been unable to travel a distance to attend an AGM, is likely to travel as far, or farther, to attend the six monthly committee meetings? Many of us are able to expound on what we feel ought to be done, but how good would we be at doing what is necessary? Will we have the time required, when it is required? Can we encourage, obtain necessary support and co-operation from other members? Yet again, it is flattering to be asked to stand, declining may seem ungracious, but, unless we can fulfil the above it would be the best course.

Voting may be easier than nomination, because our secretary will ask each nominee to provide relevant details about themselves. Hopefully these details (which will appear in the Spring Issue together with specific details on voting procedure) will enable us to assess whether nominees fulfil what we feel are the necessary criteria. *But, remember, voting will only take place if there are sufficient candidates for any position.*

Why ‘... and whither the Nature Group?’ Well, since conception we have, in the main, benefited from hardworking committee members. Some have put in untold hours behind the scenes, so quietly and efficiently that most members are unaware of what has been done on their behalf. There comes a time though when even the most conscientious committee person feels it appropriate to stand down. Vacancies occur and need to be filled. Quite apart from that any healthy committee needs a good mix. To loosely use, not impolitely, an equine metaphor, say two wise old war-horses, several stalwart shires in their prime, and a couple of promising colts/ fillies.

So, *whither the Nature Group* depends on you. Firstly, we should all participate in the election to achieve a full, enthusiastic, committee. So, nominate wisely, vote thoughtfully. Secondly, on an ongoing basis, we should fully support every event that is arranged for us.

Photographs in this issue. All colour photographs are scanned by our printers and in past issues have come from transparencies, with an occasional exception. By way of experiment in this issue pictures come from mixed sources, although they are all still scanned by our printers. Of the total of nineteen pictures, eight are from transparencies, six are from prints produced on an ink jet printer and the remaining five come from traditional dark-room prints produced from colour negatives. Do you think there is any discernible difference between the magazine images? Are they all acceptable, especially in terms of sharpness? Please let me know. At the time of writing I haven’t seen the colour proofs, I’ll add my comments to yours in the next issue ❀

FROM THE CHAIR

DAWN OSBORN ARPS

your cameras. Some people have expressed the view that it was a poor summer. From my own perspective it was pretty good. I didn't often find it necessary to use an umbrella for the walk from my car to the office. I completed a number of projects in the garden and was able to attend a number of field meetings, as well as visit a number of other sites. I hope that you all managed to support at least one field meeting this year. It is a good way to gain knowledge of a site that was previously unknown to you and also an excellent opportunity to make new friends. I hope also, that more of you will consider offering to host a day for your fellow members. As I have said, on more than one occasion, no specialist knowledge is required, you are not expected to teach or instruct on techniques, only act as a guide around an area you are familiar with. Without significantly more volunteers to act as guides, field meetings will become a thing of the past, and that would indeed be a great pity. So please, fill in the form included with this issue. Don't put it on one side to do later, do it today.

I am writing this on what I suppose is the first day of autumn. Vernal equinox is behind us, the days are shortening rapidly and the evenings are becoming chill. Some of the gardeners amongst you will, like me, be struggling to finish all of the jobs yet to be done before the garden can be put tidily to bed for the winter. Conflicting with this sense of duty is the desire to enjoy the opportunities for photographing autumn foliage, emerging fungi, rutting deer, red squirrels and perhaps, later, new born seal pups with their mothers. I'm praying for a fine autumn of early morning mists, sunny days and clear skies. Days of mellow fruitfulness - may they all be at the weekend so that I can enjoy them!

I would like to thank everyone who has supported the 'Chairman's Day' to be held on 9th November. I am sure that you will all enjoy the day. There may just still be time to book if you would like to attend, please use enclosed booking form, or telephone me.

As this will be the last issue of the Iris before Christmas, I will take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and a productive year of photography in 2003 ❀

CHAIRMAN'S DAY - SATURDAY 9th NOVEMBER 2002

AN EXCELLENT FULL DAY'S PROGRAMME AT LICHFIELD, STAFFORDSHIRE.

LAST CHANCE! PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL

LECTURES

Martin Withers FRPS - '*The Weird and Wonderful World of Australia*'.

Mike Lane FRPS - '*Manipulating Nature*'

Robert Hawkesworth FRPS - '*One Man's Fancy*'

John Myring ARPS - '*A Presentation on The Iris*'

SUCCESSFUL A & F PANELS

Colin Smith FRPS, Chairman of the Nature Distinctions Panel will show some successful Associate and Fellowship applications and discuss why they were successful.

Tickets are only £15 which includes morning coffee, lunch, afternoon tea & biscuits.

**Book with Dawn Osborn ARPS - Please use enclosed form
or for last minute bookings telephone: 01889-881928**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

I am pleased to announce that the RPS Council approved the change to our Regulations which enables us to hold a postal ballot for those members who are unable to attend the AGM. This change comes into being with the election of Officers and Committee for 2003-5.

CHANGES TO OUR REGULATIONS RE ELECTION PROCEDURE

Would you please note the following change and alter your copy of the Regulations.

Paragraph 6.3 to read as follows.

6.3 *Nomination of candidates for election as officers or members of the committee shall be in writing and be received by the Secretary at least four months, normally 31st December, prior to a General Meeting at which the election shall take place. [This will facilitate the use of a postal ballot for those members unable to attend the General Meeting].*

NOMINATION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE - 2003/2005

Please remember paragraph 6.4 of the regulations remains unaltered and states:

6.4 *Nominations shall be proposed and seconded by two members of the Group and also indicate the willingness of the candidate to serve if elected.*

At the next AGM on 26th April 2003 the Officers and Committee are due for re-election. The above alteration to our Regulations, enabling a postal vote for those of you who are unable to attend the meeting, means that I must receive the nominations by Tuesday 31st December 2002.

A nomination form is enclosed with this issue of *The Iris*. Nominations are only required for Officers and Committee Members, Ex-officio posts are committee appointments.

Whilst some of the existing committee will undoubtedly offer themselves for re-election please do not assume that this means nominations are not necessary, they are. Under recent RPS regulations there is an eight-year maximum in place for any position as an Officer or on a Committee.

It should be borne in mind that there are tasks that need addressing such as programme co-ordinating, report writing for the RPS Journal, help with the annual exhibition and so on and that Committee Membership may involve being willing to offer such help. If I may add a personal note here it is that I have always found the Committee to be a very happy group and is certainly not a hotbed of political intrigue!

VOTING

Ballot papers will be enclosed with the spring issue of *The Iris*, they must be returned to me by Friday 25th April 2003. Full details of all nominations and voting procedure will appear in the Spring Issue.

Robert Hawkesworth FRPS, Hon. Sec. RPS Nature Group.

'WATER IS THE KEY' -

ASPECTS OF BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY IN AUSTRALIA

BY PETER BEASLEY ARPS

Australia is a country of extremes, from the tropical rain forests of Queensland to the arid deserts of the interior. In the drier areas in particular water can be a magnet for birds. Without water, in times of drought, whole areas can be almost devoid of bird life, but when the rains come, so do the birds.

Many species of bird are nomadic, stopping to breed when conditions are right, perhaps having successive broods in locations hundreds of miles apart. Some birds are adapted to survive without regular water supplies, getting moisture from insect prey, for instance, and some, such as Woodswallows, have powder-down in their plumage rather like Pigeons, which may be an aid to preening when water for bathing is limited. Nevertheless, birds will drink and perhaps bathe when water is there, and will take full advantage of any perennial water sources, and indeed ephemeral water sources, such as puddles left by rain, when they are available.

I am a great lover of deserts and semi-deserts and, for me, a favourite form of bird photography is to set up a small canvas hide at a source of water used by birds, to either target a specific bird, or to just wait and see what comes along. This is a wonderful way of observing unfamiliar birds at close range and to capture them on film, and later to relive the experience after the films are processed.

Water sources can be anything from a large water-hole for cattle to a rain puddle, or you can make your own. On one occasion, just a few yards from the River Murray in Victoria, I filled a vehicle rut with water. It wasn't long before Rosellas were using it for drinking. Another time I set a small plant tray into the ground in an area of semi-desert and kept it topped up with water. White-browed and Masked Woodswallows, which seemed to be everywhere hawking insects, eventually found it and from my hide I counted over a hundred birds drinking or waiting their turn, perched and on the ground. The noise was deafening. Then a few Budgerigars flew in, landing on the backs of birds on the ground before doggedly fighting their way to the water. I was too enthralled to take any pictures, but I did get some of the Woodswallows.

Ephemeral sources of water, such as puddles left from recent rains, can be very productive, provided there are not too many of them. An isolated puddle, perhaps the last one remaining after the others have dried up, can be a gold mine should you happen to come across one. Once, over the course of a day, I saw forty species of bird drink from a small rain puddle on a car park, and amongst these were Red-winged Parrots, lovely birds which I dearly wanted to photograph. Tomorrow, I thought, I would set up my hide and have a go. There was a thunderstorm overnight - water everywhere! The chance was gone.

Many times I have set up at similar puddles, on forest tracks, dirt roads and road edges. There is always something to photograph. Often the same birds turn up; common species such as White-plumed Honeyeaters, Crested Pigeons, Peaceful Doves and Double-barred Finches, for example. But it's the more elusive birds which tempt me to keep at it, birds which turn up irregularly, and then only briefly. Lovely birds such as Scarlet Robins and Scarlet Honeyeaters spring to mind and I have just poor record shots of these. Occasionally the totally unexpected turns up; such as when a Brown Goshawk came to drink at a cattle trough. With my 500 mm lens I could only get head shots! At the same trough, an Echidna appeared, raised itself up and drank. They were not supposed to do that, I was told, Echidnas don't drink!



Photo by Peter Beasley ARPS - 'Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater'
(*Acanthagenys rufogularis*)



Photo by Peter Beasley ARPS - 'White-browed Woodswallow' male
(*Artamus superciliosus*)



Photo by Peter Beasley ARPS - 'Silvereye'
(*Zosterops lateralis*)



Photo by Peter Beasley ARPS - 'White-plumed Honeyeater'
(*Lichenostomus penicillatus*)

So it's not only birds which can be photographed. Last year I had my hide at the edge of a very muddy water-hole on a cattle station in outback Queensland. I was expecting to photograph Black-winged Stilts. I did, but then two Dingoes appeared and waded into the water just in front of the hide. Very exciting; this was the closest I'd ever been to truly wild Dingo. Again, I had to be content with head shots.

Artificial water-holes, known as dams in Australia, are frequent in areas which suffer drought; always worth checking out for water birds such as waders and herons, especially those with gently sloping sides and shallow margins. It may be possible to pick out favoured places at which to put a hide and I managed to get close-up shots of Black-fronted Plovers like this. These are common birds, but very lovely and very photogenic. At larger water sources it is often difficult to know where to put a hide if you are interested in small birds. However, I have often found that if there is a bush or shrub near the edge, birds will use this as cover before flying down to drink and some success may be had there. A branch, or similar, just laid into the water will often be used as a ramp.

I have frequently seen birds plunge bathing and have been intrigued by this behaviour. It is understandable if the water is deep and steep-sided, in cattle troughs, for instance, but I have also watched birds do this in normal shallow pools. Maybe there is an anti-predator element to this. Anyway, last year I came across a small pond, ideal for photography, I thought, but a thick black line all the way round the edge turned out to be drinking bees - and birds were plunge bathing here too, maybe to avoid the bees!

I relate this because bees can be a real nuisance when photographing at water and a number of my shots have been ruined by out-of-focus flying insects, and bees in particular.

So, if you are interested in hide work, and particularly at water, there is much that can be done. If you see birds flying from a puddle on your travels, it may be worth having a go. Water is the key to some good photography ☘

SHOULD THE NATURE GROUP HAVE A 'PANEL OF EXPERTS' ?

This question came up during an informal discussion at our last committee meeting. On the one hand there are many excellent and expert books covering virtually every aspect of nature photography; not to mention magazine articles. (Well, there are some I certainly wouldn't mention. Am I alone in wondering how an earth they manage to get the rubbish published, and be paid for it!) On the other hand there can often be a particular query which you really want the answer to, but none of the available material really covers it.

Hence the possibility of a Nature Group 'Experts Panel'. Yes, I know, I can hear you saying it, 'How on earth would it work?'. Well, I think that is the fourth question. The first being do members think it is a good idea; second, would members use it; third, which members would make good experts. Answers please, on a postcard.

Seriously, make the effort, pick up a pen or start tapping on your keyboard and let your editor know the answer to the first two questions, is it a good idea and would it be used. If there is enough positive response the committee can move on to deal with questions three and four. I'll report progress in the next issue.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR NEW PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR

Firstly, I would like to say a big thank you to all those who led field meetings during 2002. I was not able to attend as many as I had hoped, but those I did get to were most enjoyable.

We now need to start thinking about the programme for 2003. If you have been a leader before, then please do so again next year! If you have not previously been a leader, then now is the time to give serious consideration to having a go. Remember, if there are no meetings in your area then it is simply because nobody has volunteered to lead one.

You don't need to be an expert photographer or naturalist to be a leader. In fact, the only really essential duty of a leader is to obtain permission from the landowner for our visit. If the site is a nature reserve (e.g. local Wildlife Trust), then it is polite to contact the warden - they may also help with useful information regarding timing etc. If you have any concerns about what is required, then don't hesitate to contact me - my details are listed on page 3 of the magazine.

If you decide to lead a field meeting, then please complete the form that should be included with this magazine, and send it to me as soon as possible. You can of course copy the form, or write on plain paper if you prefer. Alternatively, just send me an e-mail.

Looking forward to a busy 2003 programme!

Nick Jarvis – Programme Co-ordinator.

REPORTS OF FIELD MEETINGS IN 2002

2nd June 2002 - Clattinger Farm Reserve, Wiltshire - Leader John Hankin LRPS

Having had to cancel last year due to Foot and Mouth disease, it was with some trepidation that I made arrangements for this visit to one of the best Reserves managed by the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, my first venture into leading a Field Meeting! Nine of us met on an overcast and slightly breezy morning at Neigh Bridge and in deference to the England v Sweden match we moved off in three cars in four three two formation to meet the first of two Wardens at the adjoining Reserve, Swillbrook Lakes, where we were to spend the morning as there were other visitors to Clattinger and I had agreed the amendment which, as it turned out, gave us a much better day. Nick took us along the main access path where there were Common Spotted and Southern Marsh orchids, also some hybrids and as we went further into the reserve we heard (but didn't see) Reed, Sedge and Garden Warblers and a Nightingale. We then walked to a waterside area where more orchids and Adders Tongue Fern were showing well and some members concentrated on the various damselflies on the reeds nearby.

We had been allowed to park in an entrance to Clattinger Farm so went back to the cars for lunch and were joined by Martin, the second warden who was to lead us for the afternoon. Having been there in the morning he was right up to date with the possible subjects and took us round three of the eleven fields which make up the whole Reserve of over 150 acres of unimproved grassland, purchased by the Trust in 1996. Due to subtle differences in soil from field to field there is a great deal of diversity and we saw areas of Meadow Rue and Meadow Thistle, Milkwort and Yellow Rattle and several types of Orchid,

inevitably not all in best condition but good specimens were found of Twayblade, Early Marsh and probably the highlight, Burnt Tip. Butterflies were in short supply in the somewhat unfavourable conditions but a pair of Common Blues ignored several cameras to concentrate on their own affairs. As the day advanced the weather deteriorated and forced a somewhat early close to the visit but I think we all had a good day - one of the "Gang of Four" from the Midlands said it had almost been worth missing the football! I am grateful to all who joined me, especially the member who travelled from Bedford, and for the donations to the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust ☘

Sunday 9th June - Oxwich Nature Reserve, - Leader Margaret Hodge FRPS

My years of unbroken early mornings of promising sunshine for Oxwich came to an abrupt end on June 9th! In pouring rain and gloomy skies I was surprised and very touched that sixteen people turned up from as far afield as Hereford, Birmingham and Newport.

I already knew that I had pneumonia and was bothered about my temporary lack of stamina and had mentioned the fact to two good friends, the Marine Biologist and Dean of Swansea University, and to a recently retired tutor of a local field study centre. To my delight, both were in the car park and they led the group into the dripping Nature Reserve. Obviously no photography but plenty to see and talk about with two professional naturalists.

At 11.30ish the greyness broke and patches of blue took over. A quick packed lunch, the beach suddenly looked most attractive and I joined the group. The first things to be found were a few stranded *Verella Verella* or By-the-wind Sailors, beautiful gentian blue small jellyfish that very occasionally get brought on shore from the N. Atlantic. Further down the shore were some most attractive groups of Dog Whelk eggs, *Chitons* or Coat-of-Mail shells of various colours, including a very unusual black and white one. Mating Shore Crabs aplenty, a female Shore Crab with a very healthy batch of eggs, a newly moulted Velvet Swimming Crab. Both male and female Worm Pipe Fish, the male carrying eggs, a distant relation to Seahorses, this is apparent in the shape of the snout. On an upturned stone was a cluster of tiny fish eggs, the eyes of the fish clearly seen through a lens. *Evelia*, the grey sea slug was observed on a stone amongst whelk eggs, tiny brittle stars, a red Beadlet Anemone. Mid afternoon, with the sea coming in, the lure of the flowers in the Reserve, now in good sunshine, many went back with cameras at the ready. I did not join them but reports of specimens seen were good. Sixty or more Bee Orchids, plenty of Pyramidal, Twayblade, Round-leaved Wintergreen, large patches of Bloody Cranesbill, Evening Primrose with vibrant red leaves, Yellow Rattle, Common Rock Rose, Biting Stone Crop, many varieties of Vetch, Common Broomrape. This is probably a very small list of what was seen, the very wet season that we have endured this Spring has greatly favoured the flower growth. So thankfully, the day ended on a very cheerful note and I hope all found that their high mileage was well worth it. One car full left hoping that they might find Pearl Bordered Fritillary on their return journey at Kenfig!

In 2003 the Oxwich day will be the Sunday 15th July, when there is a very low tide shortly before 2 p.m. I look forward to seeing you then ☘

29th June - Tissington Trail & Dovedale - Leaders Robert Hawkesworth FRPS & Dawn Osborn ARPS

Twenty-five members gathered in the Alsop Car Park in rather grey, but at least dry, conditions. There were many regulars, but also a few new faces, which is always good to see.

The trail northward passes through a few cuttings and the limestone faces are rich in ferns, however the wind was funnelling through and made sensible photography impossible, cre-

ative options only! Out in the open the wind really showed us what it could do, much of the vegetation was keeping its head well down and the discovery of an absolutely splendid Bee Orchid spike (*Ophrys apifera*), one of the best I have ever seen, added to our frustrations with the weather. Soon however we were cutting down the side dale below Nettle Knowe where the effects of the wind were greatly reduced. It is a splendid site for Jacob's Ladder (*Polemonium caeruleum*) and we certainly found many spikes of this beautiful flower. It is well named, however, for you may remember that Jacob "laid his head upon stony ground" before falling asleep and having his vision. It loves to grow in covered limestone scree, usually on a steep slope so access is not always easy. But who said nature photography was going to be easy? A number of intrepid members made the ascent and tackled the subjects, at least the wind had lessened somewhat and what is more the light had improved, there was even a hint of blue up there. It was a good place for most of us to have a look around and I concentrated on some of the lichens, being anchored to several tons of limestone boulders at least meant the wind had less effect.

Down where the dale meets the River Dove, at Coldeaton Bridge, there is a good picnic spot; it is even possible to sit with your legs dangling over the bank, much more comfortable. The sun made an appearance and with it some butterflies, Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*), Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*), also lots of Chimney Sweeper Moths (*Odezia atrata*). One group of members set up their stall around a mat of Thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*) and waited for visits. The stroll along the Dove is very pleasant, the path has now been metalled with crushed limestone, to minimise erosion of course, and it was braided with lovely stands of Meadow Cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*) which naturally occupied many of us.

The climb back up to the cars is always a nuisance on this lovely stroll, but where better to take your time than this lovely corner of the White Peak. It was a day enjoyed by all with better weather than forecast and lots of laughter ☘

6th July - Ainsdale Local Nature Reserve - Leaders Tony Bond FRPS & Colin Smith FRPS

Eighteen members and guests assembled on the beach, the furthest travelled having come from Sussex. After a yomp over the mobile dunes we joined the Dune Trail on the stabilised dunes and headed towards Pontins Holiday Camp. We arrived at a large open area which was a mass of Marsh Helleborine. Cameras soon appeared, the main difficulty being to find some helleborines to photograph which did not involve trampling others. Robert Hawkesworth's former pupil, Sarah, went plant hunting and soon turned up Bee Orchid, some lovely Early Marsh Orchids and some very early Grass of Parnassus. She also found the best specimen we saw all day of the real speciality of these dunes, Dune Helleborine. We were also entertained by some magnificent Dark Green Fritillaries on a stand of thistle.

People seemed reluctant to tear themselves away for lunch back at the cars, but there was something different for the afternoon. We headed south after lunch and saw lots of plants typical of this specialised habitat. The nationally scarce Portland Spurge was abundant, alongside the commoner Sea Spurge. The main target was a colony of Pyramidal Orchids bordering on the National Nature Reserve. This has always been regarded as scarce on these dunes. However, in this favoured area over 1800 spikes were counted in 2001. They were in all sizes and colours providing lots of opportunities for photography.

That concluded the entertainment for the day which, after an appaling June, was blessed with soft, hazy sunshine and a very light breeze throughout. The flowers were at their peak with some of the real specialities of this uncommon habitat. We hope that everyone went home happy ☘

continued on page 21.

JAPAN'S WINTER WILDLIFE'

CRANES, SEA-EAGLES AND SNOW MONKEYS

BY MICHAEL GORE CVO, CBE, FRPS

Japan does not come immediately to mind as a country to visit to photograph wildlife: huge overpopulated, sprawling cities, vast industrial complexes and every piece of available land under the plough for rice production. But these impressions are misleading for there are large areas of Japan which remain unspoilt and there are some very special opportunities for the wildlife photographer.

My wife and I flew to Tokyo with Singapore Airlines, an airline I can highly recommend, and spent a few days visiting the historic sites at Kyoto which we last saw 33 years ago when I was stationed in Korea. The Golden Temple, the Zen Buddhist Temple, Kyomiso and the Imperial Palace were still beautiful but development has crowded around them and they have lost some of the magic. We returned to Tokyo by the famed bullet train and, after a disagreement with a taxi driver who spoke no English (no-one under the age of 40 seemed to know any English) and who was unhappy with the amount of photographic and winter gear we wanted to load into his boot, eventually reached the hotel where we met up with the rest of our group. We were ten photographers on a tour arranged by Joe Van Os Photo Safaris; the same company we travelled with to Svalbard as reported in the Spring 2002 issue of *The Iris*. Although we did not know it at the time that night in a Tokyo hotel would be the last time we would eat anything approaching western food until we returned twelve days later.

An early morning flight took us to Hokkaido, the most northerly island in the Japanese archipelago where we were to spend eight days. Hokkaido was cold, so cold in fact that we wore Antarctic kit for the duration of our stay. First stop was the Tsurui Muru Crane Reserve where several thousand Japanese Cranes winter. The sight of these magnificent cranes feeding, courting and dancing on a snow-covered frozen lake was awesome. There were some forty Japanese bird photographers there already and, although few spoke anything but rudimentary English, we managed to communicate with them. Several were particularly interested in my Wimberley head which I have adapted to work straight off the top of the tripod without an Arca Swiss ball and socket head. We learned that most of these photographers took only pictures of cranes; later we met others who specialized in Whooper Swans or sea-eagles.

As at Bosque del Apache in New Mexico, where the authorities provide supplementary food for the Sandhill Cranes, here the Japanese Cranes are fed. I had only ever seen these cranes in the distance in the demilitarised zone between North and South Korea where small numbers winter each year and migrating flocks passing overhead in Korea, so it was a thrill to see and photograph them at close range. And circling over them were White-tailed Sea-eagles occasionally doing battle in mid air. Flocks of a hundred or more Tree Sparrows ventured onto the ice to gather grains of rice from between the feet of the cranes; in Asia the Tree Sparrow replaces our House Sparrow as the town sparrow. The cranes were not easy to photograph being black and white on snow and it was necessary to over-expose +1 2/3 stops to avoid everything turning grey. In fact for the duration of the trip I kept my Canon at +1 2/3 stops for just about everything I photographed was on snow. Some people go to +2 or even +2 1/3 stops but I have found that +1 2/3 is usually about right.

From Tsurui Mura we moved north to Kawaya where perhaps five hundred Whooper Swans winter and are again provided with extra food. Here too there were Japanese photographers who specialise in photographing only Whooper Swans. The setting was magnificent and much of the time was taken up photographing scenics with swans rather than just the swans by themselves.

Our next move was to the very north of Hokkaido to a fishing village, Rausu. This was going to be the highlight of the trip for we were after Steller's Sea-eagles which I had only seen in the distance in Korea. These massive sea-eagles winter on the pack-ice in the Okhotsk Sea gleaning pickings from the fishing boats. A northerly wind had pushed the ice far out to sea towards the Kuril Islands, still occupied by the Russians who annexed them after World War II, and after a rough trip in a boat stinking of fish we eventually located the sea-eagles within half a mile of the Kurils. There were about 40 of these magnificent birds on the ice together with some White-tailed Sea-eagles and a host of gulls and we spent half-an-hour with them before a storm blew up and we had to return to Rausu. The Wimberley head really came into its own here as I was able to use my 500 mm lens on the tripod on the deck of the rolling boat. I am fortunate that I do not suffer from seasickness but the rest of the party were not so lucky and I came in for some rough words when I started singing "Over the sea to Skye" to cheer them up! In the event we went out to the pack-ice twice and after I was satisfied that I had everything I wanted on film I tried out my digital Canon D30, which takes all the EOS lenses, for the first time. The results were stunning and far easier to print than scanned transparencies. But that must be a subject for another article. [*Ed - yes, please.*]

The final part of our tour was to the Japanese Alps to photograph the famous snow monkeys which spend much of their time bathing in the hot springs at Jigokudani Spa. We flew back to Tokyo and boarded a coach for the six-hour drive followed by a mile trek in the dark through the snow to the Spa. We have all marvelled at television shots of these incredible monkeys diving and swimming in the hot pools but the reality was even more spectacular. Two troops numbering about eighty each live in the pine forest bordering the hot springs and lodge. When not foraging for food they spend much of the time keeping warm in the water. One individual became a particular favourite and I named him "Rasta" as he was the only one with an unruly mop of hair. We spent four days at the hot springs and I could easily have spent twice as long for these monkeys have to be one of the most photogenic subjects in the natural world.

The birds and monkeys and the settings in which we saw and photographed them were quite spectacular and can be found nowhere else in the world. Indeed, our whole Japanese experience was far more exciting than I had expected and barring the raw fish, snails, rice and fish soup which comprised our breakfast each morning when we were away from Tokyo I would do it all again, next winter ❀

Photo opposite: A pair of Japanese Cranes (*Grus japonensis*) displaying on ice at Hokkaido - Michael Gore FRPS.

Photo on page 20: 'Black-fronted Dotterel' - Peter Beasley ARPS.





Photo by Michael Gore FRPS - 'Steller's Sea-eagle' (*Haliastur pelagicus*) in flight.
Hokkaido, Japan.



Photo by Michael Gore FRPS - 'Steller's Sea-eagles' (*Haliastur pelagicus*)
on pack-ice, off Hokkaido, Japan.



Photo by Richard Revels FRPS - 'Cowslips in the Peak District'
from First Place set in The Iris Five slide competition.



Photo by Patricia Seekings ARPS - 'Lichen (*Xanthoria calcicola*)'
from her Third Place set in The Iris Five slide competition.



continued from page 14.

Sunday 23rd June - Bedfont Lakes - Leader Chris Wood

Five members attended this event – whether there would have been more but for an unfortunate printing mistake suggesting that the venue was at Bedford rather than Bedfont remains to be seen!

This was my first attempt at leading a field trip and I'd chosen the venue because it had always proved to be a reliable source of subjects, usually without too much searching. The 180-acre site has, over the years, been orchards supplying Covent Garden market, gravel pits and a landfill site before being reclaimed and turned into a country park.

On the day I was disappointed that subjects were fairly hard to find. I suspect that a lot of the blame must go to the weather, which had been unseasonably wet and cool until a few days before the event. Damselflies were abundant but flighty; Dragonflies and Butterflies were almost completely absent! The day was rescued somewhat by a fine selection of moths which had been trapped overnight and brought to the venue by Bill Burns Begg. After lunch two of the group moved on to Chertsey Meads, a local water meadow, where a selection of caterpillars and Banded Demoiselle were found.

Thanks to those who came. If any South West London/ Surrey members would be interested in jointly organising a trip next year get in touch via cjwood2000@hotmail.com ☘

NATURE GROUP CONVENTION 8th - 10th AUGUST 2003

Well you asked for another Convention so here it is!

Martin Withers and I listened to what you said, it was actually very complimentary, and your suggestions for future such events and we have as far as possible attempted to put a suitable package together. The Friday will be taken up with your arrival, then of course dinner, followed by a star lecture given by Mike Lane FRPS, '*Modern Wildlife Photography*'

The whole of Saturday morning will be put aside for Distinctions Guidance hosted by Colin Smith FRPS assisted by members of the Nature A & F Panel, with an alternative of visits to some Leics. and Rutland 'NT Reserves. Those of you wishing to receive A & F Guidance should complete the form and send it as directed to Colin Smith. After lunch there will be members' lecturettes with a maximum of **25** slides, please indicate on the booking form if you would like to take part, with the alternative of visiting the Reserves. After a silver service dinner we shall have another star lecture, Richard Revels FRPS, '*Butterflies and other mini beasts*'

On the Sunday Tony Bond FRPS will present a star lecture on Fungi, followed after coffee by more members' lecturettes. We disperse after lunch.

Please complete the booking form and send it with your deposit to Martin Withers, also as noted above please complete the other form if you wish to take part in the Distinctions Guidance Session.

Robert Hawkesworth FRPS

OBITUARIES

DR. DAVID COOKE AE, FRCGP, FRPS

David was born in 1922. At the onset of World War II David joined the Royal Air Force as soon as he was able. He served as a bomb aimer with Bomber Command and flew a full tour of 30 sorties and finished his service career as a bomb disposal officer. Following the War, David went to Liverpool University where he qualified in medicine. He held junior appointments at the David Lewis Hospital and Liverpool Maternity Hospital before settling into general practice in Ellesmere Port in 1955. David went on to serve the local community as a GP for over 30 years.

David was an excellent swimmer, gaining a University Blue in water polo and serving the sport in a variety of capacities over many years. He was medical adviser to the Great Britain swimming squad from 1975 and to the Amateur Swimming Association from 1982. He was Great Britain's team doctor at the European Swimming Championships in 1977 and 1981, at the World Championships in 1978 and at the Commonwealth Games in Canada in 1978 and Australia in 1982.

From his school days David had an interest in photography, particularly in the field of nature. It was in this discipline that David gained his Fellowship in 1963. For many years he sat on the Nature Conservancy Advisory Committee and was a Council Member of the Zoological Photographic Club for 40 years. Some of David's 'classic' images are housed in the National Collection of Nature Photographs that forms part of the RPS Collection.

David will be greatly missed by many fellow workers in the field of nature photography and for his wise counsel and encouragement to those striving to master the techniques of nature work.

David passed away on October 29th 2001 and leaves a wife Shirley, four children and seven grandchildren to whom we extend deepest sympathy.

Robert Hawkesworth FRPS

DR. KEVIN CARLSON ARPS

It will sadden all who knew him to learn of the death, after a long illness, of Doctor Kevin Carlson at his home in Hickling, Norfolk, at the age of 87. Born in Bristol, his father was Swedish, his mother English. After attending Clifton School, he studied medicine at Bristol University and set up in general practice in Norwich with his brother, Rudolph. He also worked part time as an anaesthetist at the General Hospital in Norwich.

Nature photography was his overriding free time interest from early days, and he rapidly built up a reputation as one producing work of the highest quality, originally working with monochrome glass plate negatives. He joined the Zoologist Photographers Club in 1946 and continued to produce prints in monochrome until colour became more readily available. He worked in many countries, as widely separated as Iceland and Scandinavia to most of Africa, South and North America and Australia. Wherever he went, his wife Christine went with him. She is a first-class naturalist and was always available to help him. They had a particular love of Portugal which they visited many times and together they wrote, and Kevin illustrated, a major work on the birds of that country. His

photographs have illustrated many books on the birds of most parts of the world, and have won for him prizes in many competitions. He was still working abroad until a year or two before his death.

He was a man one loved to be with, he loved the company of people, and he will be sadly missed by all who knew him.

Harold A. Hems, FRPS

[See one of Kevin Carlson's photographs on page 31]

BOOK REVIEW

'WHERE AND HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH WILDLIFE'

BY PETER EVANS FRPS

First published 2002 by Guild of Master Craftsman Publications Ltd.

ISBN 1 86108 224 X - Hardback (254 x 254 mm) - £22.95

180 pages - 250 colour photographs. Foreword by Martin Withers FRPS

Peter Evans FRPS, with the publication of this, his first book, has now joined the small but elite band of Nature Group members who are accredited authors.

To set the scene a few brief quotes from Peter's introduction to his book; '... the best places outside Europe to take top-class pictures.' ... 'It is concerned with wildlife; not flowers or trees, just creatures that move. It concentrates on the wildlife that most travellers want to photograph - the mammals and birds - with a bit about the frogs, lizards, snakes, crocodilians and insects. ...'. '... The ones [places] I describe in this book are simply those I have found to be the best in my last 30 years of photographing wildlife.'

All of you who have read 'Outdoor Photography' will know the quality of photographic reproduction and, as to be expected with the same publisher, that quality is repeated in this book. As with any book containing so many photographs some will appeal more than others, dependent upon the reader's personal preferences. For my taste there are some excellent pictures and I am sure everyone will find many to enjoy. Each picture is captioned with the subject's common name (sometimes followed by a brief note) and details of camera, settings, lens and film. A good deal of consideration has obviously been given to the layout, with pictures taking priority over text.

Opening sections cover 'Planning the trip' - 'Staying Fit' - 'Hardware and technique' and 'What makes a good wildlife picture'. This latter section should be required reading for everyone embarking on nature photography. Then there are sections which cover some fifteen countries; each opens with a basic map of the country showing the locations. Although the text is concise it covers, for each section, travelling independently or with a company, accommodation, local transport, wildlife to be seen and photographed. The charming brevity makes it easy to assimilate the information and practical advice which is occasionally salted with a dry aside.

As Peter himself writes '... There is not space here to be comprehensive, but there are many books, magazines, videos, websites and tourist bureaux which can give you the fine detail.' Before, however, you look for such fine detail you need to decide where you are going, and what you want to photograph. Peter's book provides not only a practical overview of many locations and subjects but also some very enjoyable reading ☘

‘CALLING ALL NATURE GROUP AUTHORS ...’

BY YOUR EDITOR

To borrow the words of Michael Caine’s reputed remark, ‘... not many people know that’. ‘That’ is that amongst Nature Group members there are some very talented, accredited authors. Whilst they are naturally modest, retiring types I feel it would be nice for the rest of us to be aware that they are members of our group.

Some names may already be known, Heather Angel FRPS, Bob Gibbons FRPS are both prolific writers. Then there are Peter Evans FRPS and Constantinos Petrinis FRPS who have both recently produced their first books. Not forgetting David Hosking FRPS, Mike Lane FRPS and Martin Withers FRPS. In the next issue of *The Iris* I hope to be able to provide details of these authors’ publications.

I am fairly sure, though, that the above list is not comprehensive and my apologies to those I have omitted. In order that I may include you please send me details of your books, before 23rd January 2003, so that I can make amends and list them in the forthcoming edition ☘

CD-ROM ‘An Interactive Guide to obtaining your Nature Associateship’. Now Available!

I am delighted to advise you that this has now received approval from both the RPS Council as an official RPS publication and also from the Chairman of the Distinctions Advisory Panel as a distinction guide. As a result we have permission to offer it for sale.

The co-authors of the CD, Chris Mattison FRPS, John Myring ARPS, Colin Smith FRPS and Tony Wharton FRPS (all modest men) are quietly delighted that it has been so well received within the RPS. It seems that it may well be used as a basis for developing a future range of CDs which will eventually (it is hoped) cover all RPS Distinctions.

The contents consist of seven sections:-

- 1/. An introduction explaining what happens on an assessment day and how applications are assessed.
- 2/. A copy of part of the Nature Panel Information booklet produced by the RPS.
- 3/. A copy of the Nature Photographers’ Code of Practice.
- 4/. Advice on print selection and presentation.
- 5/. Advice on slide selection and presentation.
- 6/. A ‘tutorial’ set of twenty seven images. In this section the viewer will have an opportunity to consider all the images, noting good and bad aspects of individual pictures and decide which make the best fifteen for an application. They are then able to arrange their selected set in the order they feel it should be presented, either as prints or slides.
Next they can compare their thoughts to those of the authors. ‘Hot spots’ are used on individual pictures to demonstrate points for consideration. Finally the authors’ selected set is shown with the reasons for including or omitting images.
- 7/. Finally there is a selection of successful applications.

The CD-ROM costs £10 (including p & p and VAT). Cheques should be made payable to ‘*The Royal Photographic Society*’ and sent, quoting your RPS membership number to: John Myring ARPS - 39, Barnetts Close, Kidderminster, Worcestershire, DY10 3DG.

MEMBERS' LETTERS

The views expressed by correspondents are not necessarily those of the Editor, nor the Nature Group Committee, nor the RPS.

Dear John,

I know that many members of the Nature Group have experienced the problem of certain blue flowers coming out as a nasty pink. Bluebells are the most notorious example.

You can therefore imagine my delight when my slides of some Derbyshire bluebells recorded them as a rich blue, just as I remembered them. The day was fine with broken cloud and I did not use any blue filters. I can only attribute this somewhat unexpected result to the film which was Fuji Provia 100F. No doubt our Hon. Secretary would say it was due to Derbyshire magic!

Fuji claim that Provia 100F has an improved yellow filter layer for better colour reproduction. As a retired emulsion puddler I can only guess that perhaps this also has some absorption in the far red where the problem lies.

At the risk of being accused of promoting Fuji (I used to work for another outfit!) there is another property of the film which makes it eminently suitable for long exposure work. Fuji claim that no correction is required for exposures up to 128 seconds. Although I have never made such a long exposure I have used the film extensively for fungi and never made any allowance for reciprocity failure, with excellent results.

I would be interested to hear whether any other members have used this film for bluebells and if they can confirm my hypothesis. While I have no connection with Fuji I would willingly accept a few professional packs for "further evaluation"!

Tony Bond FRPS (Leigh, Lancs)

NATURE ASSOCIATESHIP APPLICATION RESULTS

The Nature Distinctions Panel met on Tuesday the 17th September. Due to revised RPS regulations regarding successful applications, in particular successful Fellowship applications, only Associateship results can be given in this issue.

Successful Associateship Applications

Ruth Berry	Lancaster	subject - botanical.
Manoj Channabasavanna	Sindhgi, Banagalore, India	subject - birds, butterflies and mammals.
Bill Coster	South Woodham Ferrers	subject - birds.
Michael Deverell	Hambridge, Lamport, Somerset	subject - birds.
John Gardner	Wakefield	subject - birds.
Barbara Hawkesworth	Nottingham	subject - fungi, lichens and flowers.
Mark Walker	Blackpool	subject - underwater.
Michael John Seyfort	Kew, Victoria, Australia	subject - fungi.

'THE CRANES OF HORBORGA'

By CHARLES BROWN ARPS

During a business trip to Sweden in the early '60's, I learned of an area to the west of the country where hundreds of Cranes gathered for just a few weeks each spring prior to flying to breeding grounds to the north.

However, it was not until nearly 40 years later, in the spring of 2001, that I was able to experience this remarkable event for myself with a most rewarding visit to the marshland reserve of Hornborga. During this visit it became obvious that these majestic birds provide excellent photographic opportunities and so I returned in the following spring of 2002 as leader of a small group of photographer friends to spend time at Hornborga, having made all the necessary arrangements for serious photography.

The Hornborga reserve is managed in a sympathetic and professional manner, providing undisturbed feeding adjacent to safe roost sites, essential factors for the continued success of this annual spectacle, clearly reflected in the gradual increase of Cranes each spring to a current number of almost 9,000 birds!

Early each evening, all the Cranes leave the marsh and meadows where they have spent the day feeding for their roost some 3-5 km away. In the short twilight period before night fall, barley is scattered over the meadows by means of a huge tailor-made vehicle in readiness for the Cranes return the following day. The scale of this operation is tremendous, with approximately 17 tonnes of grain being used over the 4 weeks when the Cranes remain at the reserve prior to continuing on their migration and dispersal.

The Cranes can be viewed from a purpose built observation building and a large external adjacent area which is particularly well sited for photography. This is called "Trandansen" - quite literally Swedish for "Crane-dance" - the building is comfortable, heated and constructed on slightly elevated ground immediately alongside the marsh and grassland areas where the Cranes gather. Trandansen is the perfect location to unobtrusively observe Cranes feeding, drinking, and bathing and to experience the spectacle of their dancing courtship. From time to time odd pairs of birds engage in this courtship routine which sometimes becomes contagious with many birds joining in, all leaping into the air with wings spread. A graceful and attractive display which presents a real photographic challenge.

Due to a plentiful supply of food and a very strict nondisturbance policy the Cranes have become remarkably conditioned to general day-to-day activity at the centre. Birds venture as close as 40m, providing endless photographic opportunities of not only the enormous flock in its entirety but closer individuals and small groups in a narrow water channel in the foreground. The viewing area faces almost due north and is ideal for photography throughout the day, but as one would expect better modelling occurs in the early morning and late afternoon on brighter days.

Although very pleasing photographic results can be achieved from the Trandansen Centre, it is possible for dedicated/experienced wildlife photographers to use the small number of purpose built one man photographic hides, strategically placed in the meadow, in close proximity to open marshland where even better picture opportunities may occur.

Use of these hides is subject to pre-booking and warden approval. The small wooden hides are approximately 100 m apart and have a floor area of just 2m x 1m. All four walls are





Photo by Charles Brown ARPS - ‘Crane pair in courtship “dancing”, Hornborga.’



Photo by Charles Brown ARPS - ‘Crane pair drinking, Hornborga.’

provided with shuttered 200 mm (8") lens apertures at about 800 mm (30") above floor level being ideal for using tripod mounted equipment. It must be stressed the hides are basic, with provision of a "comfort bucket" and just enough room to lie in a sleeping bag for additional warmth. Four of our group elected to use these hides and were more than satisfied with the unique photographic/wildlife experience. Our warden had familiarised us all with the strict conditions under which we would be using the hides, including entering prior to dawn before the return of the Cranes to the reserve. Consequently, we were all in situ by 4.45 a.m., fully aware that we were not to leave the hides until collected by the warden at around 7.45 p.m. During this 15 hour period it was imperative we did not open the hide doors (let alone venture outside) because to have done so would have caused the Cranes major disturbance.

Armed with tripod, small stool, plenty of warm clothing, food and drink for our 15 hours of solitude we had not long to wait before our confinement was rewarded. Immediately at daybreak the first Cranes arrived and we were soon surrounded by hundreds of these majestic birds - none of which appeared to take any notice of our lenses. Some individuals came as close as 2m when busy feeding or passing on their way to drink at the water-side. Whooper Swan, Greylag Goose, Mallard and Lapwing also came close during the day. We all used every lens in our bags from 24 mm to 500 mm plus converters. The most useful was probably the 100-400 zoom which catered for small groups of birds at most distances and isolated individuals as required. My "Tilt and Shift" 90 mm lens was particularly useful in some situations since the tilt feature could bring all the birds from the nearest to those in the far distance into sharp focus, even at a mid aperture setting of f5.6, which allowed for a faster shutter speed which coped better with any birds that were moving. As the hours progressed, our photography became more selective but we had all managed to use 8-9 films. Subsequently, we learned that the official Crane count had been 4,700 on this truly magical day - one I shall certainly remember.

During both visits, which were arranged by Swedish friends connected with tourism, we stayed at the manor house style hotel Dagnas Castle. A delightful, spectacular building immediately adjacent to the marsh and just 15 minutes walk from Trandansen. We enjoyed excellent cuisine, accommodation and Swedish hospitality. With the use of a minibus throughout our visit and the services of a local 'birder' guide who drove us to various sites around the lake, we observed numerous species of birds. We were able to photograph Great Crested and Slavonian Grebes on the lake as well as Black Woodpecker, nesting in an adjacent forest. In the hotel grounds mature hollow trees held a small colony of Northern Jackdaws and 3 pairs of nesting Fieldfare. Both species were relatively tame and came within camera range.

At the end of our trip we were all in agreement that our visit had been a great success, for in addition to having secured lots of unique images we also had some wonderful memories of a very special place. My only regret is that it had taken me 40 odd years to get there! ❀

Photo on page 27 - Charles Brown ARPS - 'Crane, Hornborga'

THE IRIS 'FIVE SLIDE' COMPETITION 2002

Many thanks to all of you who participated in this year's competition and congratulations to the three winners. Also our thanks to our three selectors, Barbara Lawton FRPS, Dawn Osborn ARPS and Tony Wharton FRPS, especially Tony who also dealt with all the administrative duties.

First Prize	£25	Richard Revels FRPS
Second Prize	£15	Roger Pinn ARPS
Third Prize	£10	Patricia Seekings ARPS

Some statistics. In this competition entrants are required to submit five slides, each representing a different subject, choosing from ten set categories. For whatever reasons this year had the lowest entry since the start of the competition with only 17 members participating. With five slides each this meant that a total of 85 slides were entered with a maximum of seventeen in any one section.

Section 1 - *Mammals* - 12/17.

Section 2 - *Birds* - 15/17.

Section 3 - *Reptiles & Amphibians* - 2/17.

Section 4 - *Insects & Spiders* - 15/17.

Section 5 - *Other Invertebrates* - 1/17.

Section 6 - *Marine & Freshwater Life* - 5/17.

Section 7 - *Wild Flowers* - 14/17.

Section 8 - *Fungi* - 11/15.

Section 9 - *Other Botanical* - 7/17.

Section 10 - *Geological* - 3/17.

Next Year? The original concept was to try to encourage members to broaden the range of subjects they photograph through an informal, free to enter, competition with little administrative burden (hence no report cards etc.). It was important not to have a competition which might compete with our annual exhibition.

In view of this year's low entry it has been decided to suspend the competition for a year. Suggestions regarding revitalising the competition, or replacing it with another informal one, would be welcomed. Please contact your Editor ☘

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY ASSOCIATION

Many of you will undoubtedly have read in the '*Outdoor Photography*' magazine of the formation of a new association dedicated to nature photography, the Nature Photography Association (NPA). In all probability several of you will have already joined.

In informal conversations with Chris Weston, one of the founders, it has been established that the NPA has no wish to be thought of as being in competition with the RPS Nature Group. Rather that the two organisations should be seen as complimentary to each other in promoting all that is best in nature photography. It could be that, at some time in the future, opportunities may occur when it would be possible to liaise with certain events. There is also a possibility that Nature Group members will be offered a discounted membership of NPA. Nature Group members will be kept informed of any developments through *The Iris*.

As can be appreciated there is a tremendous amount of work, not to mention commitment, in setting up a completely new organisation with such high ambitions. We wish NPA every success ☘



Photograph by Kevin Carlson ARPS Deceased - 'Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*).'
Photographed in early May 1973 in Southern Portugal using a Pentacon Six with a 180mm Sonar lens and FP4 film. Picture and details copied from the front page of a copy of RPS Nature Group Newsletter No. 12 dated March 1979.

***NATURE GROUP ANNUAL EXHIBITION
PRINTS & TRANSPARENCIES
CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES 17TH FEBRUARY 2003***

Enclosed with this issue is the entry form for our annual exhibition with full details for the exhibition calendar and conditions of entry.

Some of you may not realise that this is an opportunity for your work to be seen around the country. As well as the opening presentation accepted entries form a travelling exhibition which is shown at various photographic societies and venues. Last year the travelling exhibition was seen at 21 venues. Don't worry, this does not mean that your entry will be away for twelve months. Your work is returned after the opening presentation and the highest quality copies are sent in the travelling exhibition.

Another incentive is that every effort will be made to ensure that all entrants are represented in the Exhibition.

Please read all the conditions of entry and the notes carefully, especially those relating to postage and the catalogue.

HAVE YOU RECEIVED ALL YOUR ENCLOSURES?

Your Editor and Sub-editor try to ensure that every envelope always contains any enclosures for that issue. This issue, however, contains a record number of enclosures, all of them important, hence the following check list. Contact your Editor if necessary.

1. Annual Exhibition Entry Form.
2. Nomination Form for Elections at Annual General Meeting 2003.
3. Booking Form for Chairman's Day 9th November 2002 - **complete & post now!**
4. Booking Form for Weekend Convention at Brooksby 8th - 10th August 2003.
5. Booking Form for Distinctions Guidance Session at Brooksby Convention.
6. Re weekend at Field Studies Council, The Kingcombe Centre, Kingcombe, Dorset.
7. Field Meeting Leaders.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Advertisements are accepted subject to suitability, availability of space and in good faith by the Editor. However neither he, nor The Nature Group nor the RPS accept liability in any respect for any advert printed in this magazine.

PLEASE CONTACT THE EDITOR FOR RATES ETC.,

CANON EOS EQUIPMENT FOR SALE

EF 300 mm f4 L USM imaged stabilised lens and Extender x 1.4.
Both in excellent condition with hard cases, original boxes and booklet.

£850 for both - Contact John Myring ARPS on 01562-824356.

HOSKING TOURS - NATURE PHOTOGRAPHIC HOLIDAYS

Photographic holidays organized and led by David Hosking FRPS, Martin Withers FRPS and Chris Mattison FRPS. All of the tours are researched with nature photography in mind and aim to maximize the photographic opportunities that each location has to offer. All the tours are equally suited for experts and beginners alike. Outlined below is the current programme of tours.

NEW BROCHURE NOW AVAILABLE

YEAR 2003

TANZANIA, Jan/Feb - CYPRUS, March - ARIZONA, May - GALAPAGOS, May
NAMIBIA, June - ITALIAN ALPS, July - KENYA, July
YELLOWSTONE - September - ECUADOR, Sept/Oct
MADAGASCAR, November - FALKLAND ISLANDS, Nov/Dec

For brochures and detailed itineraries contact:

David Hosking FRPS, Hosking Tours, Pages Green House, Wetheringsett,
Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 5QA. Tel: 01728 861113

Fax: 01728 860222 - E-mail: david@hosking-tours.co.uk

Website: www.hosking-tours.co.uk

DAVID OSBORN FRPS EFIAP
Wildlife photographer, Naturalist & Lecturer

David has organised and will be leading yet another of his successful wildlife Photo-tours. Booking now for the ever popular tour of the fabulous Falkland Islands. Visiting Bleaker, Carcass, Saunders and Sea-lion Islands as well as Volunteer Pt.

Departures November 2003 (limited availability) & November 2004.

Also pre-book for Florida February / March 2004.

Call or write now for further details to:
David Osborn FRPS - 5, Crompton Close, Little Haywood,
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LED BY - ADRIAN DAVIES MSc, FBIPP, ARPS.

These courses can be followed independently or booked together to attract a discount.

IMAGES OF NATURE: SILVER TO PIXELS - Friday 25th - Sunday 27th July 2003.

- Image capture with digital cameras and scanners.
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Residential fee £140.

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The course embraces a very wide range of subject matter and photographic technique. As much time as possible will be spent on practical photography in the field, with visits to a variety of locations and habitats including seashore, freshwater, woodland, and Dartmoor.

Residential fee £230.

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For full details of these, and all other FSC courses at Slapton, contact:
Slapton Ley Field Centre, Slapton, KINGSBRIDGE, Devon, TQ7 2QP

Tel 01548 580466 Fax 01548 580123 e-mail fsc.slapton@ukonline.co.uk

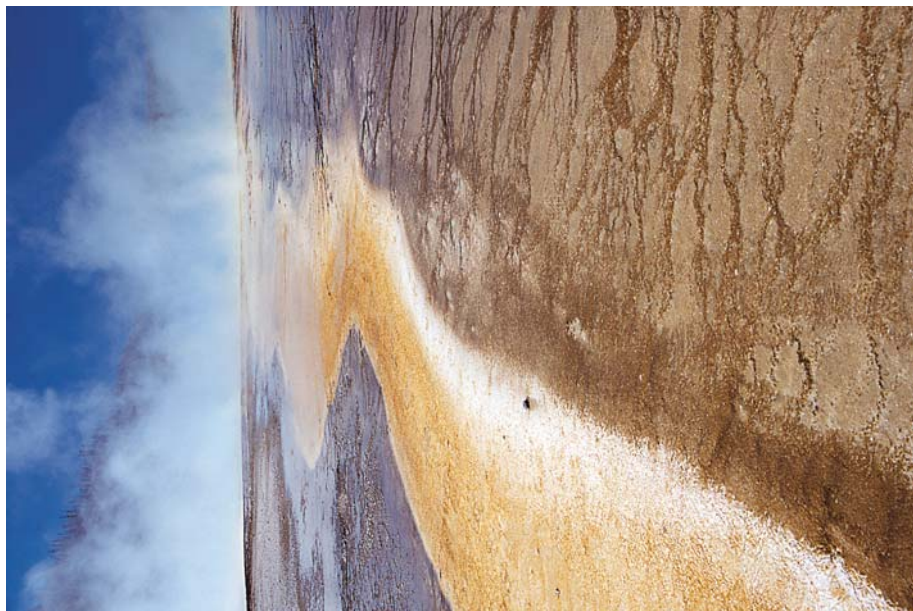


Photo by Roger Pinn ARPS - 'Grand Prismatic Spring' from his 2nd Place 'Five Slide comp' set.



Photo by Roger Pinn ARPS - 'Emerging Emperor Dragonfly' from his 2nd Place 'Five Slide Comp. set

