

# THE IRIS

MAGAZINE OF THE NATURE GROUP OF THE RPS

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THE **RPS**  
ROYAL  
PHOTOGRAPHIC  
SOCIETY



# **RPS Nature Group Summer Residential weekend**

## **Skomer Island and Margam Discovery Centre**

**Wednesday 24th June to Monday 29th June 2020**

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James Foad LRPS, the organiser of this event, is now accepting bookings for the 2020 Summer Residential weekend which is going to be slightly different to previous years!

Participants should book their own accommodation for the nights of 24th and 25th June in the Martin Haven area.

On 26th June there is a visit to Skomer Island at a cost of £11.00 per person.  
However the boat trip to the island is weather dependent.

After visiting Skomer we move on to Margam Discovery Centre for the rest of the weekend.

16 places are available on a first come first served basis.  
Once the places are filled a waiting list will be opened.

Cost for the weekend is: £175.77 for Margam, plus £11.00 for the boat plus your accommodation and meals for the first two days.  
A deposit of £75.77 is required to secure your booking.

For further details and to book call James Foad LRPS on 07834 810430  
or email: [jamesfoadlrps@inbox.com](mailto:jamesfoadlrps@inbox.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

Marsh Helleborine by Duncan Locke LRPS

# Committee

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## Officers

**Chairman:** Thomas Hanahoe FRPS

Email: thomhanahoe@gmail.com

**Vice Chairman:** David O'Neill LRPS

Email: david.oneill@newhorizons.uk.com

**Secretary:** Duncan Locke LRPS

E-mail: duncan.locke@btinternet.com

**Treasurer:** David O'Neill LRPS

Email: david.oneill@newhorizons.uk.com

**Immediate Past Chairman:** Kevin Elsby FRPS

Email: wildlife@greenbee.net

## Committee Members

**Editor of The Iris:** Gerald Griff ARPS

Email: iris\_editor@griff45.com

**Exhibition Secretary:** Ralph Snook ARPS

Email: rpsngexsec@btinternet.com

**NG Rep to Advisory Panel:** David O'Neill LRPS

Email: david.oneill@wildhorizons.uk.com

**Programme Co-ordinator:** Ann Miles FRPS

E-mail: annmiles70@gmail.com

**Webmaster:** Ralph Snook ARPS

E-mail: rpsngexsec@btinternet.com

**eNewsletter Editor:** Dawn Osborn FRPS

Email: naturegroup\_enews\_editor@btinternet.com

**Stan Saunders ARPS**

Email: stan.saunders2@btopenworld.com

**Julia Andrew LRPS**

Email: andrew.julia@gmail.com

**James Foad LRPS**

Email: jamesfoadlrps@inbox.com

**Julia Wainwright ARPS**

Email: julia@julasimagesuk.com

## Ex officio Committee members

President of the Society;

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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

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I have plenty of hobbies to keep me busy!

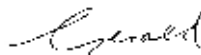
Photography is clearly one of them and another is walking. I am a keen member of the local Ramblers group and have spent many enjoyable afternoons this summer in the Midlands countryside and as a result, I get to see a lot of farmland. It is encouraging to see that many farmers are setting aside corners and strips of field for wildlife to flourish. Recently I was walking along the Staffordshire Way across a field where at least 10 metres had been left uncultivated by the hedge. The area was alive with butterflies and bees and the sound of songbirds singing came from the hedgerow. Some farmers are also letting small fields and those that are difficult to cultivate return to nature. How pleasant it is to walk through an upland meadow with umpteen varieties of wild flowers supporting a wide variety of insects. I congratulate the farmers who give over part of their production to wildlife and those, such as the RSPB, who do so much to support them. However this is not a consistent picture and there are places where I have walked this summer where there is field after field of grass with no flowers, insects or bird song. I know that the set-aside means lost production but the small rise in food costs would be a small price to pay to see more wildlife and I believe most people would agree.

Some of you living in the south will probably have already heard of Trevor Parsons, one of our members, through the radio, television and magazines. I hope you enjoy reading my interview with him in this edition.

If any of our readers has a story to tell about a distinction that has been gained, please contact me and I will get you into print!

I am very grateful once again to Dawn Osborn FRPS for all her hard work proof reading this edition of The Iris and for her valuable help in a final edit of its contents.

Enjoy your photography and please put pen to paper and write an article for the next edition of The Iris.



## CLIMATE CHANGE

### Introduction

Not for the first time over recent years, last month in Bedfordshire we experienced a period of exceptionally hot weather while further north there was severe flooding. My thoughts turn to climate change.

The United Nations estimates that as of August 2019 the world population of people is 7.7 billion. It is worth noting that in the year 1800 the earth's estimated human population was 1.0 billion, in 1900 it was 1.7 billion and in 2000 it was 6.2 billion people. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World\\_population](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_population))

Hitherto, economic growth has trumped every other policy of governments across the globe, with the objective that each year the gross domestic product should be greater than that of the previous year. I would suggest that this now needs to change with the natural environment being brought to the fore.

I quote below information from the websites of the Met Office and NASA.

### Evidence from The Met Office

In the UK, the Met Office gives the following summary for the month of July 2019; 'July began with a cool, showery north-westerly flow over the UK, but for most of the first half of the month high pressure was close to the south and west and this brought mostly dry weather with plentiful sunshine for much of England, especially the south-west, and also south Wales, but elsewhere cloud was more variable. The second half was generally more unsettled with frequent westerly and south-westerly winds, but with an exceptionally hot spell from the 22nd to 26th which saw record-breaking temperatures in many parts of the country, including a new record for the UK as a whole, and also widespread thunderstorms.'

(<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/summaries/index>):

The provisional UK mean temperature was 16.4 °C, which is 1.2 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average, making it the equal 8th warmest July in a series since 1910, though not as warm as July 2018. The mean minimum temperature was the equal 4th highest in the series. Mean maximum temperatures ranged from over 1.5 °C above normal in the south and east to around 0.5 °C above in some western coastal areas. Mean minimum temperatures were over 1.5 °C above average in much of the north and east, but less

than 0.5°C above in the south-west. Rainfall was 114% of average, but was very variable across the country, with below-average rainfall over most of Wales and the south-west, but more than twice the normal amount from Manchester to Leicestershire. Sunshine was 100% of average, and amounts were above normal over the south-west but below normal over most of Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The UK monthly extremes were as follows: A maximum temperature of 38.7 °C was recorded at Cambridge Botanic Garden on the 25th. A minimum temperature of -0.4 °C was recorded at Altnaharra (Sutherland) on the 8th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 11th, 80.4 mm of rain fell at Fettercairn (Kincardineshire). A wind gust of 50 knots (58 mph) was recorded at Berry Head (Devon) on the 29th.

### Evidence from NASA

In the USA, NASA gives evidence about climate change (<https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/>).

### Climate change: how do we know?

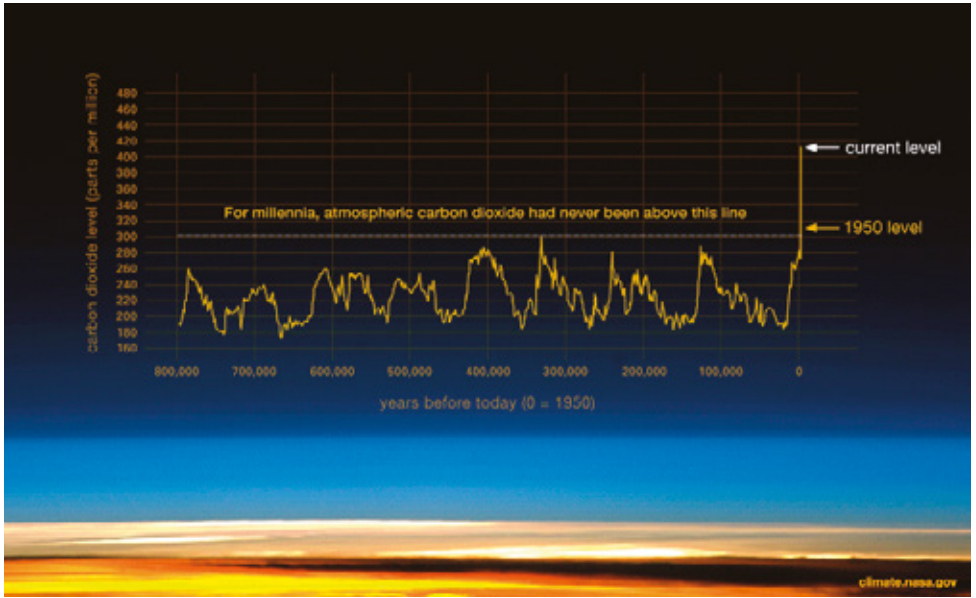
The Earth's climate has changed throughout history. Just in the last 650,000 years there have been seven cycles of glacial advance and retreat, with the abrupt end of the last ice age about 7,000 years ago marking the beginning of the modern climate era - and of human civilization. Most of these climate changes are attributed to very small variations in Earth's orbit that change the amount of solar energy our planet receives. (See the first graph, page 4.)

The current warming trend is of particular significance because most of it is extremely likely (greater than 95 percent probability) to be the result of human activity since the mid-20th century and proceeding at a rate that is unprecedented over decades to millennia.<sup>1</sup>

Earth-orbiting satellites and other technological advances have enabled scientists to see the big picture, collecting many different types of information about our planet and its climate on a global scale. This body of data, collected over many years, reveals the signals of a changing climate.

The heat-trapping nature of carbon dioxide and other gases was demonstrated in the mid-19th century.<sup>2</sup> Their ability to affect the transfer of infrared energy through the atmosphere is the scientific basis of





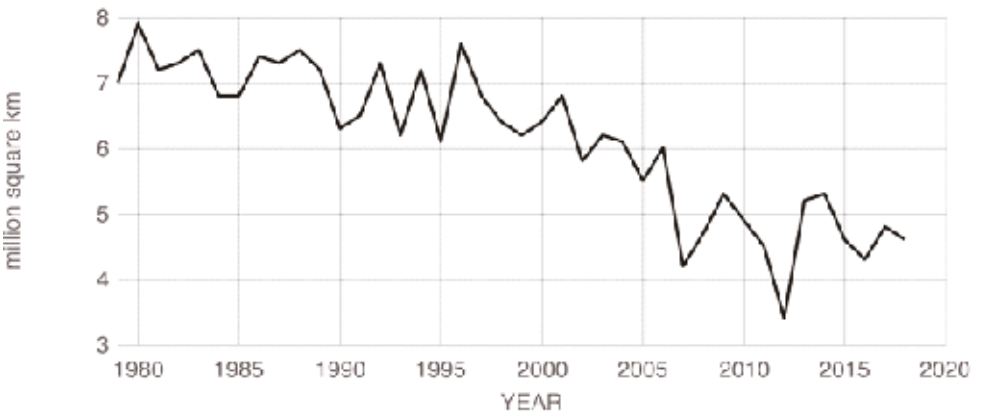
*This graph, based on the comparison of atmospheric samples contained in ice cores and more recent direct measurements, provides evidence that atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> has increased since the Industrial Revolution. (Credit: Luthi, D., et al.. 2008; Etheridge, D.M., et al. 2010; Vostok ice core data/J.R. Petit et al.; NOAA Mauna Loa CO<sub>2</sub> record.)*

### AVERAGE SEPTEMBER EXTENT

Data Source: Satellite observations. Credit: NSIDC/NASA

### RATE OF CHANGE

12.8 percent per decade



Source: climate.nasa.gov

many instruments flown by NASA. There is no question that increased levels of greenhouse gases must cause the Earth to warm in response. Ice cores drawn from Greenland, Antarctica, and tropical mountain glaciers show that the Earth's climate responds to changes in greenhouse gas levels. Ancient evidence can also be found in tree rings, ocean sediments, coral reefs, and layers of sedimentary rocks. This ancient, or paleoclimate, evidence reveals that current warming is occurring roughly ten times faster than the average rate of ice-age-recovery warming.<sup>3</sup>

### Vital Signs

NASA provides information about the Vital Signs of climate change with respect to Carbon Dioxide, Global Temperature, Arctic Sea Ice Minimum, Ice Sheets and Sea Level. For example, Arctic Sea Ice Minimum (<https://climate.nasa.gov/vital-signs/arctic-sea-ice/>) indicates that the Arctic sea ice reaches its minimum each September. September Arctic sea ice is now declining at a rate of 12.8 percent per decade, relative to the 1981 to 2010 average. The second graph on page 4 shows the average monthly Arctic sea ice extent each September since 1979, derived from satellite observations.

### Conclusion

The data from NASA satellites presently circulating the earth show the international nature of climate change. Further, the information from the Met Office relating to the month of July 2019, recording a temperature approaching 39 °C in Cambridge while at the same time the media reported the imminent danger of catastrophic flooding of the town of Whaley Bridge in Derbyshire, demonstrates the local impact of climate change. Furthermore, the recent increase in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels correlates clearly with the industrial revolution and the exponential growth of the human race.

The range of climate systems across the earth and their variation over time have created a spectrum of habitats which have been fundamental to the evolution of species and the survival of the fit: and for all we know, life on earth may be unique within the universe. I have little doubt that earth and its natural world will survive climate change but the consequence will likely be a different world to the one we know now.

As nature photographers we need to be aware of the impact of climate change on the plants and animals which are the focus of our attention and as the Nature Group of the RPS we should do all that we can to support wildlife which is currently under substantial threat as a result of our human activities.

### References

1. IPCC Fifth Assessment Report, Summary for Policymakers:  
[https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/AR5\\_S\\_YR\\_FINAL\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/AR5_S_YR_FINAL_SPM.pdf)  
  
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B.D. Santer et.al., "Contributions of Anthropogenic and Natural Forcing to Recent Tropopause Height Changes," *Science* vol. 301 (25 July 2003), 479-483.
2. In the 1860s, physicist John Tyndall recognized the Earth's natural greenhouse effect and suggested that slight changes in the atmospheric composition could bring about climatic variations. In 1896, a seminal paper by Swedish scientist Svante Arrhenius first predicted that changes in the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere could substantially alter the surface temperature through the greenhouse effect.
3. National Research Council (NRC), 2006. *Surface Temperature Reconstructions For the Last 2,000 Years*. National Academy Press, Washington, D.C.

THE  
Thom

# THE RICHES OF MY BACK GARDEN

## John Bebbington FRPS

Although I still enjoy wandering round in the countryside looking for photographic subjects – sometimes with a particular target, but often just while walking our springer spaniel – I am less able to carry heavy gear long distances and much of my work is now confined to the garden! This may appear to be limiting but it is far from being so.

My main focus at the moment is working with my wife Anne, who is a botanist, on a project on the relationships between flowers and their pollinators. She is producing watercolours of the internal structure of a range of species, and my interest is in not only photographing the behaviour of pollinators as they approach the flowers, but also their behaviour when in contact with the flower, and how this relates to flower structure.

Even when working on a specific subject it is useful to be ready for the unexpected – one example a couple of years ago was when I was photographing bumblebees nectaring on Foxgloves; a small wasp, carrying a frog hopper, suddenly settled on a leaf in front of me and stayed there long enough to be photographed. A Google search for 'parasitoid wasp carrying frog hopper' brought up a Wikipedia page about *Argogorytes mystaceus*. This is a kleptoparasite whose female stings and immobilises frog hoppers and stocks its nest with them, then laying an egg; when this hatches the larva has a supply of live food. Interestingly *A. mystaceus* males are pollinators of Fly Orchid – the flower produces a chemical resembling the female pheromone and the attracted males pseudocopulate with the flowers, transferring the pollinia. Obviously the presence of the wasp doesn't necessarily mean that we have Fly Orchid close by – in fact the nearest known sites are over 10 miles away but the challenge will be to find a local colony!



1

In Britain most native and introduced garden flowers are insect-pollinated and have evolved an amazing range of adaptations to ensure pollination. Some, like Marsh Marigold and perennial Sunflowers, are visited by a wide range of insects but others, like Foxgloves, Honeysuckle and Greater Butterfly Orchid, have specific groups of pollinators and have techniques for disappointing insect species which would take nectar (at a metabolic cost to the flower) without effecting pollination. Colour (not only wavelengths which are visible to us but also ultraviolet, which we cannot see) and scent are particularly important in attracting pollinators.

I have recently become interested in looking at UV reflectance patterns and UV-excited fluorescence in these flowers. Adrian Davies' book 'Digital Ultraviolet and Infrared Photography' provided the basic information on equipment and techniques which I needed and I'm grateful to him for subsequent advice.

Marsh Marigold, which we grow in our pond, has bright yellow petals, but on close examination these are waxy in appearance towards the base (this is also true of our common Buttercups). This 'waxy' area absorbs ultraviolet light, probably appearing very dark to an approaching insect and indicating where to land. I have used a Nikon D40, which has an UV



2

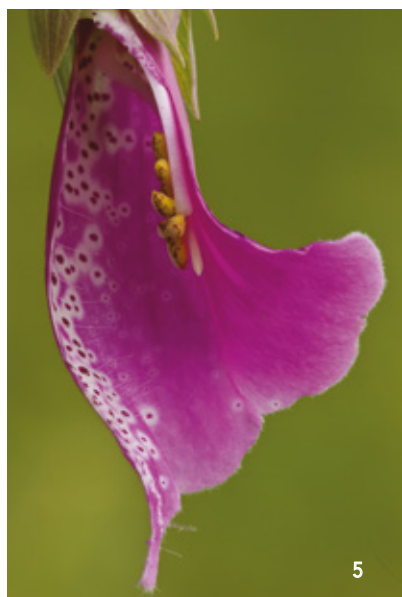




sensitive sensor, and an EL-Nikkor enlarging lens, which transmits UV wavelength, for my visible and UV reflectance photography. The resulting images have a strong magenta cast and are often easier to interpret in greyscale mode.

Foxglove flowers are just the right shape and size to fit large Bumblebees. They have long outward-pointing hairs which discourage smaller insects from moving towards the nectar, but strong patterns of spots act as nectar guides for the bees.

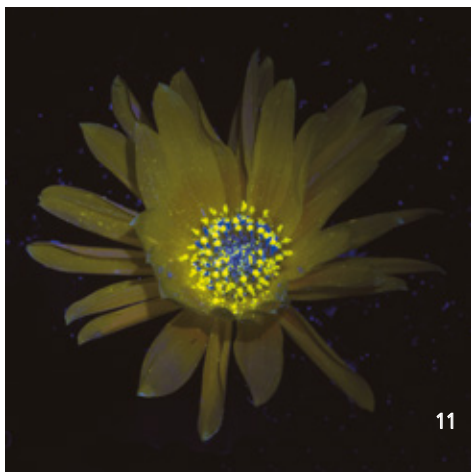
Japanese Honeysuckle flowers have long protruding stamens and stigma and are very attractive to dusk-flying moths; on warm evenings the scent is very strong and I have observed Large and Small Elephant and Striped Hawk-moths and Shark Moths nectaring on the flowers. As they approach, pollen from the long stamens attaches itself to the legs and body hairs, and is transferred to the stigma of the next flower visited. The flowers change colour, once



pollinated, and no longer attract many insects – insect visits can stimulate nectar production at a metabolic cost to the flower and, once pollinated, flowers have no need of further insect visits! Some of the flowers not pollinated in the evening are visited the next morning by long-tongued Bumblebees such as *Bombus hortorum*, the Garden Bumblebee.



On three occasions I have found Elephant and Small Elephant Hawk-moths in my garden moth trap with Greater Butterfly Orchid pollinia on their eyes. The flowers of this orchid have their nectar in long spurs, only accessible to long-tongued insects such as moths. When the moth hovers in front of the flower and pokes its head into the throat to reach the nectar, sticky pads on the orchid pollinia adhere to its eyes in a position which will cause them to come into contact with the stigmatic surface of the next flower visited. The nearest site I know for the orchid is around 3 miles away (easily within flight range of the two moth species) but when I went to camp out there, camera and flash kit at the ready, by a clump of a dozen



plants I had found previously I found that the site manager had put sheep in the area and everything had been closely grazed! Perhaps next year ...

In his book Adrian Davies' mentions that some flowers have fluorescent nectar so I decided to purchase a UV torch and investigate. It was interesting to look at a perennial Sunflower which we grow. Under normal light both stamens and stigmas appear bright yellow, and the sepal tubes dark brown. However when lit by the UV torch the pollen (but not the stigmas) fluoresce bright yellow and the sepal tubes fluoresce bright blue.

Evening Primrose (we grow *Oenothera glazioviana*) opens quite rapidly over a two-to-three minute period on warm evenings (a good subject for timelapse) and is mainly pollinated by dusk-flying moths. The pollen, which is in



long sticky strings, adheres to spurs on the moths' legs. When lit by the UV torch the flower shows darker patches at the base of the petals – reduced near violet and UV reflectance; the stamens fluoresce pink and the nectar fluoresces blue.

How (if at all) does fluorescence affect insect behaviour? Is it part of pollination strategy or is it accidental? I suppose that one day soon someone will produce a microchip which will be able to read an insect's brain and then we may get some answers! Meanwhile the head-scratching continues.

#### Image details

1 *Argogrytes mystaceus* female with Frog hopper prey; Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro hand-held, 1/125sec f22, ISO800.

2 Marsh Marigold *Caltha palustris* visible light reflectance. Nikon D40 with 105mm EL-Nikkor enlarging lens on bellows, 1/25 sec f22, ISO200.

3 Marsh Marigold UV reflectance. Nikon D40 with 105mm EL-Nikkor enlarging lens on bellows and UV pass filter, 30 sec f22, ISO200. Converted to greyscale.

4 Common Carder Bee *Bombus pascuorum* in Foxglove flower mouth. Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro hand-held, 1/400 sec f11, ISO1600.

5 Longitudinal section of Foxglove *Digitalis purpurea* flower at male stage with stamens developed and stigma undeveloped. Pentax K10D, Sigma 180mm APO macro tripod mounted, 1/10 sec f22, ISO100.

6 Shark moth *Cucillia umbratica* approaching Japanese Honeysuckle *Lonicera japonica* flower. Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro hand-held, twin flash, red torch on lens hood to aid focusing. 1/180 sec f25, ISO100.

7 Garden Bumblebee *Bombus hortorum* nectaring on Japanese Honeysuckle. Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro hand-held. 1/500sec f16, ISO3200.

8 Greater Butterfly Orchid *Platanthera chlorantha* showing pollinia. Pentax K-5, Sigma 180mm APO macro on tripod, 1/100 sec f22, ISO800.

9 Small Elephant Hawk-moth *Deilephila porcellus* with Greater Butterfly Orchid pollinia on eyes. Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro on tripod, stack of 8 images each 1/15sec f11, ISO200, blended in Helicon Focus.

10 Perennial Sunflower inflorescence lit by 'daylight' LED lamp. Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro on tripod. 30 sec f29, ISO200.

11 Perennial Sunflower inflorescence lit by UV torch. Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro on tripod. 30 sec f32, ISO200.

12: Silver Y *Autographa gamma* nectaring on Evening Primrose *Oenothera glazioviana*. Pentax 100mm macro, twin flash, Kodachrome 25 film. 1/125 sec f16.

13 Evening Primrose flower lit by 'daylight' LED lamp. Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro on tripod. 0.5 sec f32, ISO400.

14 Evening Primrose flower lit by UV torch. Pentax K-3, Sigma 180mm APO macro on tripod. 4 sec f11, ISO400.

# MY ROAD TO RECOVERY

## Nature Group member Trevor Parsons talks to The Iris editor about how wildlife photography has helped him overcome illness.

*I gather that wildlife photography has helped your recovery from recent mental health problems.*

Very much so. I am recovering from a second mental breakdown. I was admitted into St Anne's Psychiatric Hospital in Poole and have been off work for ten months. When I was discharged I felt very low and depressed and I did not want to leave home. A doctor, who knew of my love of wildlife, suggested I take short walks with a camera and take pictures of the wildlife I saw. The first day I went out for just five minutes and took several shots of a Robin. The next day was longer and the third day longer still and over time I extended my time away. I now travel across Dorset, Hampshire, Wiltshire and beyond. Nature photography gave me a reason to get out of bed in the morning. As soon as I put on my hiking boots and start walking in the countryside with my camera around my neck, a sudden feeling of peace comes over me.

*How did you get an interest in Natural History?*

From my Dad, who loved the countryside. We lived in Somerset and went on long walks to look at all sorts of wildlife. We spent a lot of time stalking deer on Exmoor.

*How especially has the photography helped your recovery?*

When you are going through a mental breakdown all your worries keep constantly going around and around in your head but when I look through my camera lens I am concentrating on that one moment in time. I forget all my worries; they fade into the background. Taking pictures gives me some much needed head space.

*I hear that it is not just the readers of The Iris that you have been talking to.*

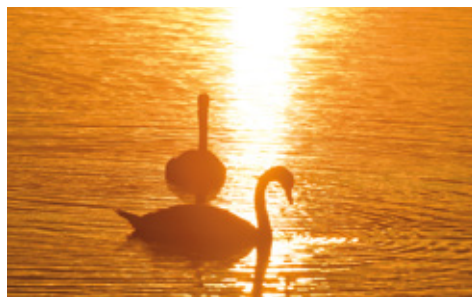
Correct! I've been raising awareness of how wildlife photography is good for your mental wellbeing in several ways. I have written blogs on the subject for 'The Mind' charity and for the Mental Health

Department of Bournemouth University. I have also been spreading the message through radio interviews and I am being featured in the July edition of the Hampshire and the August edition of the Dorset Living magazines. Together they have 114,400 readers and I hope my story will encourage others to take up wildlife photography as an enjoyable means to promote good mental health. I'm telling people not to bottle it up; talk to your mates down the pub. I also have 900 followers on Twitter, which helps spread the word. I am now working on setting up an exhibition to reach a wider audience with proceeds going to Dorset Mind. I am seeking a sponsor to cover the costs of printing and framing my pictures. If there is anyone out there who feels they can help, let me know!

*I think you are very brave to discuss your mental health issues in this public way.*

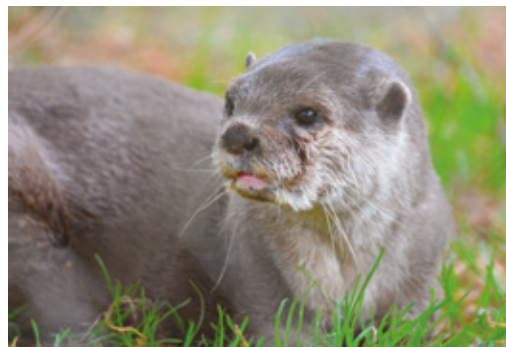
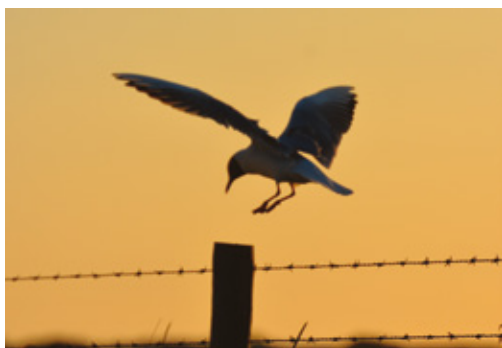
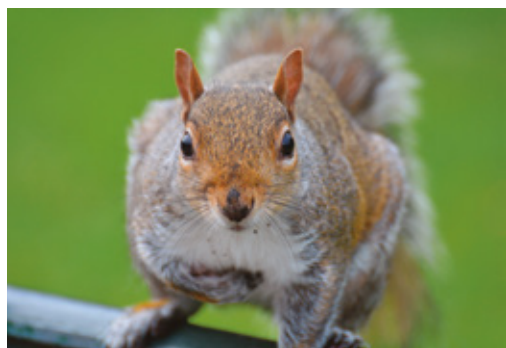
Not at all. I have never felt any stigma about my mental breakdowns. There are many different illnesses that people can suffer from. Mine happens to be a mental illness. I have found a hobby that has helped me to recover from my illness and by sharing my experience I hope it will help others in a similar position to successfully get over their health issues as well.  
tgparsons@icloud.com / T:@sonsrap10 / I:@sonsrap10

*Thank you Trevor. It has been a pleasure talking to you.*



*Above, opposite and on page 21 are a small selection of the many photographs taken by Trevor Parsons.*







# DELIGHTS OF THE S'ALBUFERA DE MALLORCA

## Ann and Phil Miles

We first visited the S'Albufera de Mallorca not long after it was declared a Natural Park in 1988. It is the largest and most important wetland area in the Balearics, a former lagoon, which has filled up with sediments converting it into an extensive flood plain with several endemic flowers, birds and insects. It is run by the government

We have stayed in the area several times since that first visit and will return again soon no doubt as we always find plenty to watch, enjoy and photograph there. The last two years, we have travelled in early May in the company of small parties of friends using Jet2 holidays, staying in a luxurious beach hotel near the reserve gates, which cannot be faulted (2020 price is £780 per person all inclusive of transport and meals other than lunch, though I doubt anyone could each much lunch after the splendid buffet breakfast). Happy to supply details along with any other tips to anyone interested.

We spent the majority of our weeks in the S'Albufera itself where the plentiful bird life is a delight. The reserve contains many trails and habitats ranging from pine woods, fresh-water pools and lagoons, extensive reed beds, salt marsh and tamarisk groves. The most representative species for photography are the Marsh Harrier, Osprey, heron and egret species, Black-winged Stilt, Avocet, waders and Eleonora's falcon. S'Albufera is the only site in the archipelago where over two-thirds the total number of species recorded in the Balearics have been seen, 271 different species with 61 breeding.

As you get near to the visitor centre in the heart of the reserve, you are greeted by a cacophony of calls from the egret and heron colonies, the wonderful sounds of dozens of Nightingales competing with an equal number of Cetti and Sardinian Warblers and the amazingly loud Great Reed Warbler song. An Osprey entertained us each day of our week in 2018 but was notable by its absence this year. Spring visitors are likely to see Woodchat Shrikes, Sandpipers, waders and several species of heron which include Purple, Night and Squacco as well as Little Bittern. In early May, when we visited in 2019, breeding was already well underway with the first Avocet and Black-winged Stilts competing for space and anxiously guarding their chicks. There are several rarer species: the Red-Knobbed or Crested Coot is one of Europe's



most-threatened breeding birds. It was reintroduced into the S'Albufera along with other European sites and now appears to be doing well after a decline a couple of years ago. The Purple Gallinule or Swamp Hen, which is multiplying after reintroduction from the mainland, is a further example of Mallorca's excellent conservation efforts.

There are around a dozen hides dotted around the entire reserve – these are obviously at their best early in the morning or later evening when the main reserve is closed (a free permit can be obtained to visit the park at these times), but we enjoyed many hours sheltering from the main heat of the day and

watching the antics of the numerous waders, including Black-winged Stilts, Avocets, Kentish and Little Ringed Plovers, and the Little Egrets extracting worms from the mud.

The number and diversity of invertebrates is enormous. The most notable groups are the dragonflies, flies (including endemic species), spiders and, above all, the moths – of which more than 300 species are currently known. Swallowtails entertained us this year in the sunlit glades

S'Albufera area has rich diversity of flora with over 400 listed species including many orchid species, the Bee Orchid, being the only one that is also found in Britain.

In 2018, we hired a car for two days and visited The Cuber Reservoir in the northern mountains. Here we saw Europe's smallest bird, the Firecrest, and one of its largest, the Griffon Vulture. The second day we went south to the salt pans around Ses Salines, where we saw a Collared Pratincole and Son Real with its many and varied orchid species including several members of the Ophrys family and Tongue orchid (*Serapias lingua*).

This year we had a day out with Pere Tomàs of Mallorca Natural Tours - a company to be fully recommended to anyone visiting the island and wanting to see and hear about its birds, flowers and ecology. We started our day at Son Bosc, which has 9 species of orchids (including *Anacamptis robusta* - an endemic Marsh Orchid). Birds were distant but



several new sightings for the list including Fan-Tailed Warbler (now called Zitting Cisticola) and Bee Eaters (lots flying around but only distant perched birds). The second part of the day was spent at the Mortix Valley walking through the ancient vineyard out onto the dramatic limestone coastal hills where we watched Booted Eagles and the rarer Black Vultures.

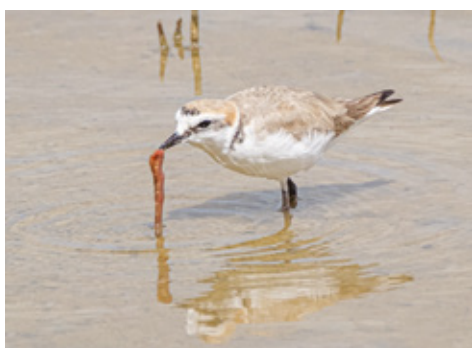


### The Photographs

Opposite: *Anacamptis robusta*.

Left: Crab Spider (*Synaema globosum*) with Bee.

Above: *Ophrys speculum*.







## The Photographs

*Left, clockwise from top:*

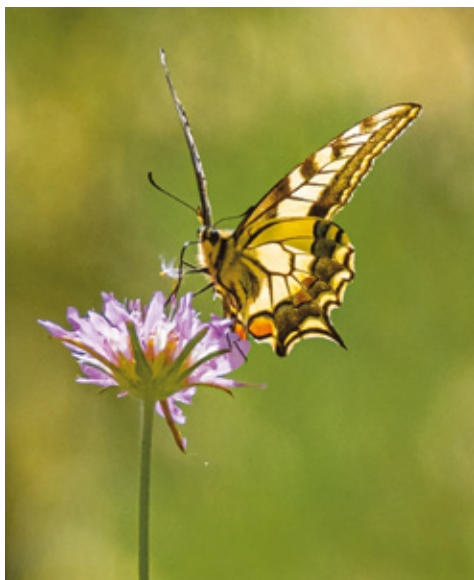
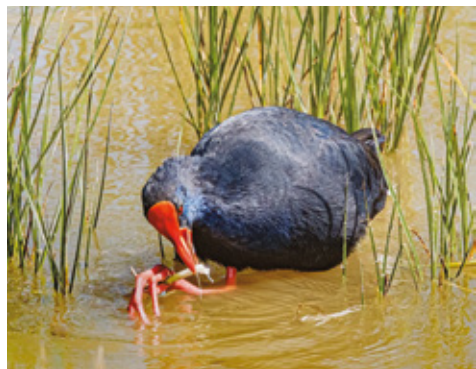
Great Reed Warbler, Griffin Vulture by Phil Miles,  
Kentish Plover with Worm.

*This page, clockwise from top:*

Little Egret with worm, Black-tailed Skimmer,  
Female Pratincole, Little Bittern.

All photographs by Ann Miles FRPS unless stated.





### The photographs

Clockwise from top left: Purple Gallinule, Swallowtail Butterfly, *Phaneroptera nana* and *Serapias lingua*.



# 2020 Members Exhibition of Prints and Digital Images

## Exhibition Selectors:

Richard Revels FRPS, Ann Miles FRPS, Trevor Davenport ARPS

## Exhibition Calendar:

Entry system will open	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2019
Closing date for entries	9th February 2020
Selection Day	19th February 2020
Report cards	by mid-March 2020
Exhibition Opening	4th April 2020
Returned <b>unaccepted</b> entries	Late April 2020

The preferred method of entry is via the online entry system. All Nature Group members will be sent an invitation email that will contain a link to the entry system. Any members that cannot use the online entry system can post a completed entry form along with a cheque for any payment due to the address shown on the form.

The Members Exhibition page of the Nature Group section of the RPS Website will contain a link to the entry system, and a copy of the entry form can also be downloaded from there.

Gold Medals will be awarded to the best print and best digital image of the exhibition. In each category a Bronze Medal, plus Selector, and Highly Commended certificates will be awarded. The **'Tony Wharton'** award will be presented to the most successful entrant in the exhibition.

The acceptance list, plus a selection of award-winning images, will be published in the Summer issue of 'The Iris'. The awarded images will also appear on the RPS website.

This year 'slide shows' of all accepted images will be available to download from the Nature Group area of the RPS website, there will be no DVD automatically issued to each entrant.

## Digital Entries

The maximum dimensions for digital files are 1600 horizontally and 1200 vertically.

## Print Entries

### Please see the separate article on print submissions before you send your entry

All accepted prints will be displayed at the Exhibition Opening. We are continuing with the 'travelling initiative' and they will also be displayed at Edinburgh PS and Wingfield Barns in East Anglia. The 2020 accepted prints will therefore be retained until the 2021 AGM. Unaccepted 2020 prints will be returned at or immediately after the 2020 AGM along with any accepted prints from the 2019 exhibition.

Further details of the entry conditions can be viewed in the online entry system, the Nature Group area of the RPS website, and on the manual entry form.

**RPS Nature Group Members Exhibition 2020**  
**ENTRY FORM (Manual Entry Only) 1 of 2**  
**ENTRANT DETAILS (Please complete legibly in BLOCK CAPITALS)**

Name: ..... Honours: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Post Code: ..... Tel No: .....

Email: .....

I accept the Conditions of Entry and confirm I am a member of the RPS Nature Group

Signed: .....

**Entry Fee**

**This year there is no fee required to enter the exhibition.**

**The fee for returning print entries by post remains at £8.**

Prints will be returned by

Royal Mail 2<sup>nd</sup> Class or MyHermes

**Return postage £8.00    £.....**

A signature may be required on delivery.

**Total Amount Due    £.....**

**Please send your entry to:**

**Please make cheques payable to:**

RPS Nature Group Exhibition  
c/o Ralph Snook ARPS

**RPS Nature Group**

8 Knole Close

Almondsbury

Bristol

BS32 4EJ

Email: [rpsngexsec@btinternet.com](mailto:rpsngexsec@btinternet.com)

## RPS Nature Group Members Exhibition 2020

### ENTRY FORM (Manual Entry Only) 2 of 2

#### IMAGE ENTRY DETAILS (Please complete legibly in Block Capitals)

##### Prints – Category A

All creatures – birds, mammals, reptiles, marine life, insects, etc.

Cat Id	Image Title
PA1	
PA2	
PA3	
PA4	

##### Prints – Category B

All plant life (including flora, fungi, lichens) and all other subjects including geological and microscopy, plus patterns, (design and form found in nature).

Cat Id	Image Title
PB1	
PB2	
PB3	
PB4	

##### Digital Images – Category A

All creatures – birds, mammals, reptiles, marine life, insects, etc.

Cat Id	Image Title
DA1	
DA2	
DA3	
DA4	

##### Digital Images – Category B

All plant life (including flora, fungi, lichens) and all other subjects including geological and microscopy, plus patterns, (design and form found in nature).

Cat Id	Image Title
DB1	
DB2	
DB3	
DB4	

# RPS Nature Group Members Exhibition 2020

## CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Entry is restricted to members of the Nature Group of the Royal Photographic Society.

### General Conditions

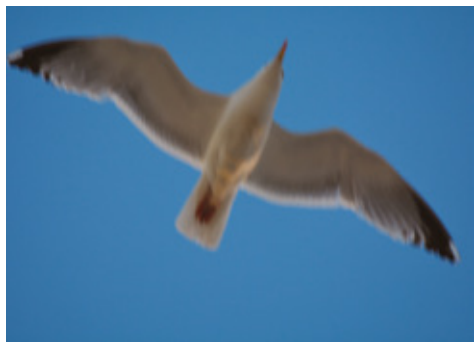
- All entries must be titled with the correct English name. Only use the scientific name where there is no English name. **Trivial and/or cute titles are not acceptable and will result in disqualification.**
- All images must convey the truth of what the author saw at the time of taking. **Any manipulation must be confined to exposure adjustments and the removal of minor blemishes or distractions.** The final image must have been produced from a single negative, transparency or digital recording and must not be a combination of images. The only exception is focus stacking.
- Work accepted in previous Nature Group Exhibitions will not be eligible regardless of which section it was entered into, ie prints should not have been submitted as slides or digital images; nor digital images as slides or prints. **This also applies to near duplicates of previous acceptances.**
- Entering this Exhibition assumes that entrants have agreed to their entries being used to promote the Nature Group by inclusion in for example, the Exhibition DVD, the 'Iris', the RPS Journal and the Nature Group's section of the RPS website. Copyright of all images remains with the author.
- Acceptance of entries will be notified by a report card which will be emailed or posted to all entrants.
- Whilst every care will be taken of all entries submitted, the Nature Group cannot accept any responsibility for loss or damage, however caused.
- Submission of work implies acceptance of the above conditions.
- **Failure to comply with the Conditions of Entry will result in your entry being rejected.**

### PRINT conditions

- Mount size for prints **MUST BE 50cm x 40cm**. Please keep the thickness of the mount to a maximum of 2.8mm. **Mounts too thick may not be hung at the Exhibition.** Please also note that any print mounts that are not the above size, or have on the back, Velcro pads, peeling tape, or any sticky substance, will be disqualified, as they could damage other prints.  
Overseas entries can be sent unmounted and packages should be clearly marked on the outside - 'Photographs for Exhibition only - to be returned to sender. No commercial value'.
- The back of each print must bear the title and name and address of the author. If using the manual entry system, the number of each entry corresponding with the entry form should also be included. The author's name must not appear on the front.
- If NOT entering via the on-line entry system then a CD/DVD containing digital files of your prints, **must** be included with the entry. See the notes below relating to digital files on the CD/DVD.
- All unaccepted prints will be returned as soon as possible after the opening of the Exhibition, but only if the correct return postage has been paid in advance. The prints will be returned in their original packaging – please ensure that this is adequate and take into account that parcels have to be opened by the exhibition secretary. **Accepted prints will be retained for display during 2020. These prints will be returned after the 2021 exhibition opens in April 2021**

### Production of DIGITAL files.

- **Maximum size is 1600 pixels horizontally x 1200 pixels vertically.** Files to be in **jpg** format, in the **sRGB** colour space, and **300dpi**. **Please do not add a background fill as the projection software will do this automatically.**
- For manual entries the CD/DVD, with your name/s and distinctions written clearly on it, should contain a folder for each entrant with up to 16 image files in each folder.  
Folder naming protocol: - Name and RPS Distinction. (e.g. **Joe Blogs ARPS**)  
File naming protocol: - Category and number corresponding to the details on the entry form, space, and Title. (e.g. **PA1 Common Seal DB1 Oxeye Daisies**). Please use both upper and lower case, as in these examples.  
**Burn as a Data CD/DVD and close it.** Do not use options to write 'Session' or 'Multi Session'.
- All CDs/DVDs will be destroyed after the close of the Exhibition.



Four more pictures from Trevor Parsons.



## Members Exhibition Print Entrants

### A plea from the Exhibition Secretary

As Exhibition Secretary for the Annual Members Exhibition I have the privilege of viewing all the entered prints in the comfort of my home before they are all sequenced and packed for the selection process. This is to me one of the highlights of the role.

Of course, the pleasure of viewing only comes after the prints have been removed from the packaging used to send them. This can be a simple task, for example opening a print box and extracting the prints, or a more challenging one if the prints are packaged in more imaginative ways and bound with many layers of protective covering and sealed with acres of packing tape. The challenge is that the same packaging will be used to return the prints to the entrant. Consequently, it must be opened with care avoiding the temptation of simply cutting or tearing the packaging. This can take a surprisingly long time requiring something

akin to the touch of a surgeon (well that may be a bit strong).

I will of course continue to open ever package as carefully as I can while preserving the packaging, but it would make my life a little easier if the prints arrived in print boxes or something like a strong cardboard mailing box.

Please do not let this missive put you off entering prints, in no way is this the intention. On the contrary I would like to see more prints entered. These are just my thoughts that may (hopefully) influence you when you come to prepare your print entry.

End of plea, I look forward to receiving your entries once the entry is open.

Ralph Snook ARPS  
Exhibition Secretary



# SLAPTON LEY RESIDENTIAL WEEKEND

## 2nd – 5th AUGUST 2019

### James Foad LRPS

On Friday 2nd of August 2019, 15 members of the RPS Nature group including two members from Scotland, descended on Slapton Ley Field Study Centre in South Devon, for what proved to be a very successful weekend of photography.

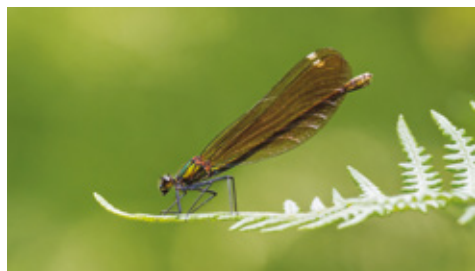
From beginning to end the centre's Staff made us all feel very welcome and were most helpful. Adrian Davis was tutoring there and was very generous with his time. At the start of the weekend he sat down with me for an hour before dinner with a map of the area and provided plenty of valuable information about different sites and what we could find where.

On Friday morning we had a 6am start and headed down onto the Ley for some early morning photography. We found Meadow Grasshoppers, Gatekeeper Butterflies and Blue-tailed Damselflies. However there was not a lot of wildlife to photograph and a decision was made over breakfast to visit Andrews Wood, a 45 Hectares area comprising

lowland mixed oak and ash woodland; ponds and lowland meadows and pastures, We spent most of the day there, photographing insects and plants. After dinner we all met up in the lab to discuss what we had found during the day. I went through the risk assessment for the weekends activities.

We met at 6am at the two moth traps on Saturday morning. Two of the group gave us expert guidance, Jeremy Malley-Smith LRPS and our group secretary Duncan Locke LRPS, on what was there. In the traps we had two Elephant Hawk-moths and a Jersey Tiger moth which we were given to photograph by Adrian Davis. After breakfast we took the minibus to Andrews Wood again. There was plenty to get our teeth into including the rare Heath Lobelia (*Lobelia urens*), which is only found on six sites in the South of England. Other finds included the Great Green Bush Cricket, Harvestman, Golden-ringed Dragonfly, Brimstone Butterfly, Painted Ladies, Large Skippers and Silver-washed Fritillary and





**The photographs, top to bottom:**

Loostrife by Edmund Fellows

Beautiful Demoiselle by Jon Ashton

Snakelocke Anemone by Annette Beardsley



Eyebright. In the afternoon we travelled over to Prawle Point, which is a mixed coastal habitats of heathland, meadow and rock pools. One of the featured plants found at Prawle Point is the parasitic plant Dodder.

After lunch some of us wondered over to the Rocks for a bit of Rock pool photography while others headed towards the Coastguard lookout and heathland area where they photographed Wall Brown Butterflies, Six-spot Burnet Moths, Small Copper and Common Blue Butterfly, Dock Bug or Leatherbugs, and Common Buzzard.

The Rocks provided some good photography as well with subjects including Rock Samphire, *Heterosiphonia plumosa* and Snakelock Anemone.

After dinner we met up in the lab and thoroughly enjoyed a talk by Duncan on focus stacking.

Sunday arrived and once again some of the party got up early and photograph the moths. After breakfast we headed to Pullerbrooke woods, which is part of the Bovey Valley Woodlands. We found plenty to keep ourselves busy in the morning. The species we photographed included Beautiful Demoiselle, Golden Ringed Dragonfly, High Brown Fritillary, Gatekeeper and Holly Blue Butterflies

In the afternoon we drove to Bovey Heathland which is behind an Industrial Estate. This was once a dumping ground for rubbish, but has been transformed by the Devon Wildlife trust, into a haven for wildlife. Here we photographed Gate Keepers, Damselflies, Stone Chats and Long-tailed Tits, Pixie Cup Lichen, Wood Ants, Labyrinth Spider, and a Slow Worm

After dinner on Sunday we each showed our three favourite images from the weekend. That was followed by a talk by Edmond Fellows FRPS on Sparrow Hawks and Tits in flight and the River Nith.

On Monday some of the group headed home after breakfast. Three of us explored Slapton Ley Nature Reserve. The remainder went to Bystock Pools, which is a small reserve of 27 hectares made up of heathland, meadow, woodland, mires and bog. The two ponds provide opportunities to photograph our native Yellow Water Lily and the Round-leaved Sundew. The group also photographed Golden-ringed Dragonflies, Soldier Beetles and Azure Damselflies. This group were also treated to a tutorial on Macro photography and Focus Stacking by Jeremy Malley-Smith LRPS.

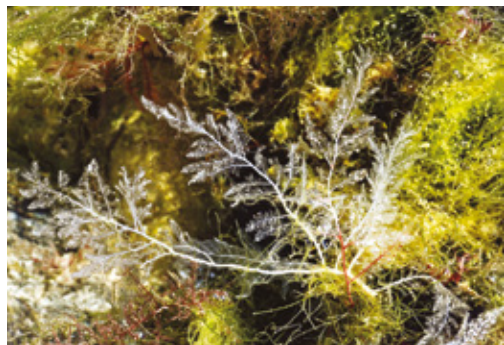
The weekend was very successful and great time was had by all. I look forward to the residential in Summer 2020.



### The photographs

This page, clockwise from top left:  
 Eyebright by Chuck Eccleston ARPS.  
 Golden-ringed Dragonfly by Maggie Finnie LRPS.  
 Heath Labyrinth Funnel Web Spider by Duncan Bovey.  
*Heterosiphonia plumosa* by James Foad LRPS.  
 Golden-ringed Dragonfly by Paul Lund.

Opposite, top to bottom:  
 Puss Moth by Paul Stillman.  
 Robberflies by Mark Perkins.







# NATURE GROUP MEETINGS – A GOOD START BUT YOUR HELP NEEDED

**Ann Miles FRPS, Programme Co-ordinator**

Although we have run a number of successful meetings already this year and have others planned, these are so far all south of Birmingham. Please consider sharing your Nature outings with other Members. 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. Most people find it an enjoyable and rewarding experience and help will be given on the small amount of paperwork required to get the event publicised etc. It is normal to advertise events both to the Nature Group Members and the RPS region in which it is held so you may well meet new nature enthusiasts in your area that way.

## **Recent Outings**

Since the last report, we have had several outings: Martin Downs, Hampshire (22nd May), Upton Woods, Worcs, (29th May), Strumpshaw Fen, Norfolk (2nd June), Ryewater Nursery, Dorset (4th July),

Sharpenhoe Clappers, Beds (28th July) and in August, the Residential Weekend. In September, we had the Video Workshop and a Macro Workshop and, in October, a Residential Weekend.

## **Future Outings**

Other planned outing: November, we hope to have a Fungi and Autumn Colours Day in Epping Forest; December we are planning another indoor workshop – hopefully with a specialist from Olympus but suitable for anyone else interested in macro and for December 31st/Jan 1st why not see the New Year in on Norfolk coast.

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

Again, if there are no meetings close to you, then think about running one - email [annmiles70@gmail.com](mailto:annmiles70@gmail.com) with your requests and suggestions.

## **Field Meeting Reports**

### **22nd May, Martin Down led by Duncan Locke**

Nine Members enjoyed warm sunny weather exploring Martin Down, a great site for butterflies and chalkland flowers. We found and photographed Burnt-tip and Common Spotted Orchids. We also photographed fifteen species of butterflies: Brimstone, Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper, Marsh Fritillary, Brown Argus, Small Copper, Holly Blue, Adonis Blue, Common Blue, Small Blue, Speckled Wood were reported plus a some day-flying moths.

### **29th May, Upton Warren led by Jeff Steady**

Ten RPSNG Members plus five non-Members from Worcestershire Camera Club investigated the birdlife at Upton Warren Nature Reserve on an overcast day with occasional showers (too cold for dragonflies unfortunately).

Upton Warren is unusual because it has two medium-sized lakes where many water birds breed;

unusual because one is fresh water (gravel extraction) and the other saline (salt extraction). Birds seen and photographed included: Avocets with chicks; Black-Headed Gulls with chicks; Lapwing; Ringed Plover; Crested Grebe; Little Grebe; Gadwall; Tufted Duck; Common Tern; plus common water birds - Moorhen, Coot, Mallard, Canada Geese, Swans, etc.

### **2nd June, Strumpshaw Fen led by Ann Miles**

Nine Members and partners visited Strumpshaw Fen on a hot sunny day though rather too windy for good Butterfly and Dragonfly photography. The biggest 'disappointment' was that the Swallowtail butterflies presented no challenge as a pair were busy nectaring right outside the Visitor Centre all day.

Most of the party visited the Meadow area in the morning where it was too windy for much insect flight but we did photograph various static insects and spiders. From the Tower hide, we had views of



squabbling Coots and Black-headed Gulls as well as distant Marsh Harriers and Hobby. Lunch was taken at the Visitor Centre and then a walk along Tinker's Lane where a wild area gave us views in the air of Norfolk Chasers and many different insects to keep the macro lens happy in the vegetation. We found a very tame Scarce Chaser to finish the photography session and returned to the Visitor Centre for a final ice cream and view of the Swallowtails

#### **4th July, Ryewater Nursery, led by John Bebbington**

(With kind permission from the site owner, Clive Farrell.) Ryewater is a private nature reserve of around 100 acres, with ponds, scrapes where the topsoil was removed and bunds. The reserve is home to a very wide range of plants and invertebrates. The day was attended by 9 NG members and one non-member.

We set off for the ponds in the morning, hoping for dragonflies and damselflies, but these were few and far between - the first pond ('The Eye') had dried up completely in the 2018 drought. There were however a couple of 4th instar Puss Moth larvae on a poplar whip. One female Emperor Dragonfly provided some entertainment but at the large pond the few dragonflies were flying fast and not very close.



Back to the shelter of a shed for lunch, then out into the scrapes looking at butterflies and wild flowers. We saw the first Brimstones of the season - too far away - and Meadow Browns, Marbled Whites and a few rather tattered Common Blues. By 3.30 pm we were all suffering from the heat and decided to quit! John hopes to repeat the day in more amenable weather conditions next year!

#### **28th July, Sharpenhoe Clappers led by Ann Miles in conjunction with East Anglia RPS Region led by Jonathan Vaines**

Over 20 people booked in for the day (including 9 Nature Group Members), but, unfortunately, after all the hot dry weather, ideal for butterflies, it had rained all day on the Saturday and the majority of people booked on the outing had cancelled by the meeting time on Sunday. Very disappointing as we had done our reconnaissance earlier in the week and found abundant butterflies and other insects. On the Sunday, five of us met up and enjoyed a morning exploring the meadows and the woodland. I hoped to find roosting Chalkhills as over a thousand had been reported in the area. No luck but there were plenty of moths, spiders and flies to keep us happy.



#### **The photographs**

*Left:*

Burnt-tip Orchid by Gill Cardy FRPS.

*Above:*

Male Marbled White underside by John Hankin.



**The Photographs, this page-** clockwise from top left: Avocet Landing by Duncan Locke LRPS, Green Shieldbug Egg-laying by John Bulpitt FRPS, Common Darter by Sue Howard, Burnet Moth by Ann Miles FRPS, Black-headed Gulls by Duncan Locke, Snail and *Terellia serratulae* by Ann Miles, Four-spotted Chaser by David Edwards. Opposite: Swallowtail by Liz Akers and Marsh Fritillary by Keith Polwin.







# THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' NIRVANA: THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

Josef Litt

Only a few places in the world are as photogenic as the Galapagos, a remote volcanic archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. It's isolation allowed evolution to go crazy and produce some iconic species. The islands are hardly habitable, and humankind started their exploitation only in the 17th century. Despite brutal depletion of the population of giant tortoises and fur seals together with the destruction caused by introduced invasive species, some of the unique species survived. Still, the majority of animals do not perceive humans as a threat.

Conservation efforts prevailed after many setbacks in the second half of the last century, and today the Galapagos National Park enjoys a high level of protection while it is still accessible to visitors. The volcanic vistas, fearless endemic animals and abundant marine life offer a breath taking, once-in-a-lifetime photographic opportunity.

The Galapagos are a first class destination for nature photographers taking images on foot. The islands are also one of the top underwater photography hotspots in the world. Aerial photography is limited but still possible.

There are so many photographic opportunities that, during the research for my book GALÁPAGOS, I had to scale down my photographic and video activities, as I was unable to handle the amount of data produced and charge the batteries needed. Fair

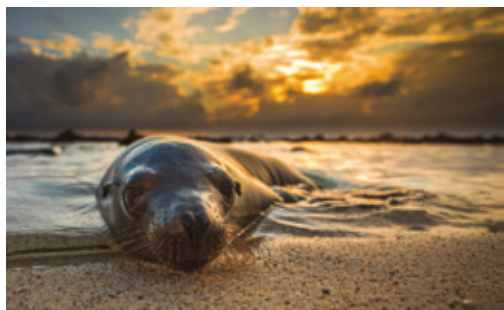
to say that a failure of my 1 TB portable back up hard drive was partly at fault. A week in the Galapagos can easily result in 10,000 images. Bring plenty of cards, batteries and means to back up your pictures.

It is possible to explore the Galapagos on your own staying on the main islands and do a bit of island-hopping. However, I would argue that the most efficient use of time and money is to embark on an island cruise aboard one of the many yachts. In such a case, you will spend the majority of the time hiking the National Park trails and on boat rides. Visitors are allowed on most sites between 6 am to 6 pm. A good operator will adjust their itinerary to make the most of the pleasing morning and evening light together with the benefit of colder conditions. It is easier to achieve this on a small boat for sixteen people rather than a yacht for a hundred.

The essentials for the 2-3 hours long hikes include plenty of water and sun protection. I use a wide-brimmed hat and long-sleeve UV-protection rash vest so I can avoid using sunscreen. Sometimes the trails lead up to a volcano, and a careful choice of photography kit saves some sweat. There are not many opportunities to use a tripod and use of strobe is forbidden, so take these two items off your packing list.

The visitors are required to maintain a minimum distance of two metres from the animals. However, the fearless fauna often ventures closer to a calm





**The photographs** Left: Aerial view of Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz.

*This page, clockwise from top left:* Giant Alcedo Volcano tortoise at Urbina Bay, Isabela, Brown Pelican at Punta Moreno, Panamic Cushion Stars at Mosquera, Juvenile Sea Lion at sunrise at Mosquera, Galapagos Penguin at Punta Vicente Roca, Galapagos Yellow Warbler at Seymour Norte.



photographer. I find my 24-70 mm f/2.8 on a full-frame body a suitable lens producing the most impactful images.

Capturing images of smaller birds requires a different setup. An ultra-long lens can become unwieldy on a three-hours-long hike. The 300 mm f/2.8 seems to be the ideal compromise. Often, I used a top quality 1.4x extender to add a little bit of reach. Some of my colleagues carry two cameras with these two lenses. I prefer to take the lenses in pouches attached to my belt and swap them when needed.

There are some opportunities to use a macro lens. I do not bother carrying my heavy ultra-wide-angle full-frame 11-24 mm glass and prefer to stitch a panorama if needed.

The time before and after lunch is often used for snorkelling. Encounters with marine fauna are intimate and exhilarating, so a waterproof camera is a must.

Serious divers and underwater photographers often choose to spend a week or ten days on a 'live aboard' to the northern islands of Darwin and Wolf. These are places with the highest density of shark population on the planet. Schools of hammerheads and seasonal whale sharks belong to the most prominent attractions. Photographing the sharks in strong currents and often less than ideal visibility is no easy feat. A modern camera with a large and sensitive sensor in an underwater housing with a large dome port helps to get the most out of the opportunities. I took the best images with a fisheye lens, optionally

with a 1.4x extender. The ban on strobes does not apply underwater.

I truly believe that diving and photographing the marine fauna around Darwin and Wolf is one of the most exciting adventures one can experience. However, I also think that a serious underwater photographer will be as productive and have as much fun during snorkelling on an island cruise in the rest of the Galapagos islands. Honestly, the images of whale sharks and hammerheads, however exciting, tend to be much of the same. But taking an underwater camera to the rock pools can offer a fresh view of the archipelago.

I left the aerial photography to the end. Flying drones within the boundaries of the Galapagos National Park without a permit is strictly forbidden. There are good reasons for the ban, mainly based on the disturbance to the wildlife and the interference with the nesting areas. The permit costs thousands of US dollars, and the approval procedure is targeted at large scale productions of big broadcasting corporations. It is possible to fly drones in the areas outside of the GNP, for example, around the major settlements and in the tortoise farms on Santa Cruz. Make sure that you have the permission of the landowner before flying. Despite the ban, one can find videos of 'fly-throughs' of Darwin's Arch or aerial images of the volcanic islands on the internet. Some guides seem to be more benevolent than others. I respected the ban and did not fly my drone within the



boundaries of GNP. I am firmly against disturbing the animals with the noise of a low flying drone. However, I would welcome an opportunity to capture the impressive volcanic geology of the islands from a unique vantage point.

In summary, Galapagos offer unique photographic opportunities on land, underwater and also just below and above the surface of the sea. Joining an island cruise escorted by an experienced photographer with local knowledge on a smaller boat (about 16 guests) maximises the chances of coming back home with memorable images.

What's not to like? Book a trip to the Galapagos, pack your camera gear and enjoy the opportunity!

Josef is an author of GALÁPAGOS, one of the best known travel guides to the islands. He leads island cruises and diving expeditions for small groups on yachts of ideal size. You will be in the right place at the right time to capture the photographs you want to bring home. Cameras sometimes play their games, and Josef will help you to make it work.

Find out more on:

<http://www.joseflitt.com/galapagos-islands/>.

Contact: web: <http://www.joseflitt.com>

Facebook: Josef Litt Photography Instagram: @jillphoto



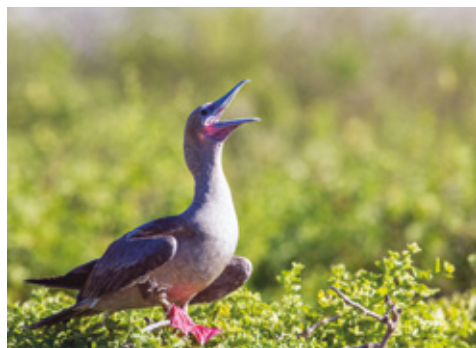
### The Photographs

Opposite: Scalloped Hammerheads at Darwin Island.

Above: Brown Pelican at Playa Punta Carolal.

Below: Blue-footed boobies at Punta Pitt.







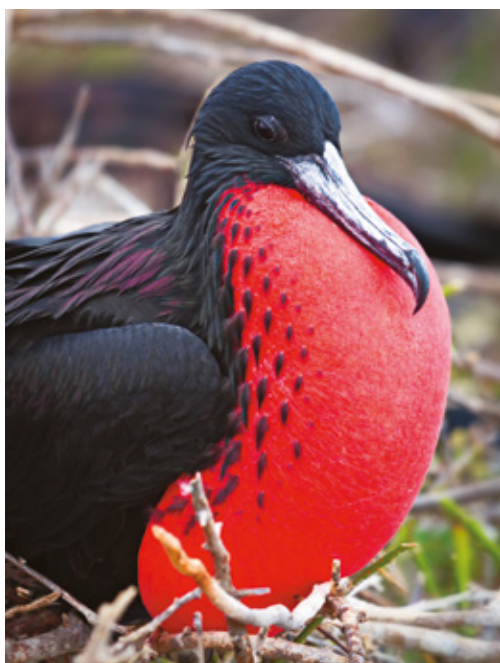


### The photographs

*Clockwise from top left. Opposite page: Pacific White-spotted Eagle Ray at Wolf Island, Early morning for a Lava heron at James Bay, Marine Iguana at Cabo Douglas, Sally Lightfoot Crab at James Bay, Red-footed Booby at Darwin Bay.*

*This page: Brown Pelicans at Darwin Bay, Genovesa, Marine Iguana at Playa Loberia, Red-lipped Batfish at The Anchorage, Smooth-billed Ani (introduced to Galapagos in the 1960s).*





### The photographs

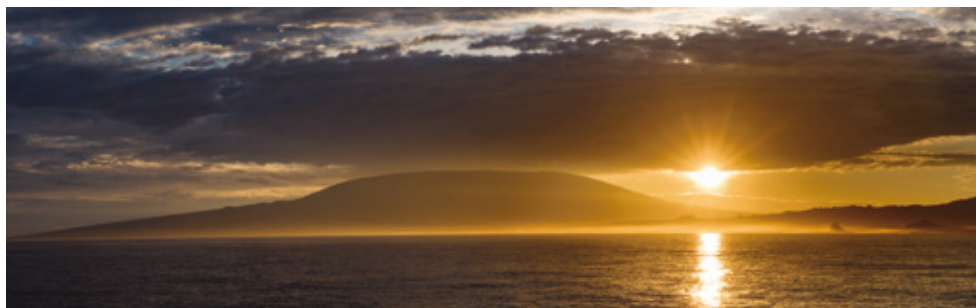
*Clockwise from top left: Sea Lion at Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, Galapagos Magnificent Frigatebird at Seymour Norte, Nudibranch *Tambja mullerini* at Seymour Norte, Female Medium Ground Finch at Rancho El Manzanillo, False Killer Whales at Darwin Island, Juvenile Whale Shark at Darwin Island.*







The photographs, from the top:  
Harlequin Wrasse, Finch and Marine Iguana, Diver at the  
Secret Cave and Sunrise behind the Wolf volcano, Isabela.



# **RPS Nature Group Residential Weekend 2020**

## **Foxlease, New Forest**

**Foxlease Girlguiding Activities Centre, Lyndhurst, Hampshire SO43 7DE**

**Friday 16th - Monday 19th October 2020**

**Leader: James Foad LRPS**



James Foad LRPS, the organiser of this event, is now accepting bookings on a first come first served basis for the 2020 Autumn residential Weekend to be held at Foxlease Girlguiding Activities Centre, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. Foxlease combines the classic charm of a Georgian Manor House and the beauty of the surrounding area of the New Forest. All rooms are en-suite.

I am told by Heather Angel that it is quite some time ago that the Nature Group stayed here.

There will be opportunities to photograph a wide range of fungi, plants, invertebrates and vertebrates.

**The cost for the for Single room occupancy is £310.00**

**A deposit of £125.00 is required to secure your place**

**For further details please contact:**

**James Foad LRPS**

**Tel: 07834 – 810430**

**E-mail: [jamesfoadlrps@inbox.com](mailto:jamesfoadlrps@inbox.com)**