

*Magazine of the Nature Group  
of The Royal Photographic Society*

**THE**



**IRIS**



*No. 76 - Spring 2000*





Photo - Charles Brown ARPS - "Kentish Plover" - Canon EOS 500 with Canon L500 mm f6.3 on Sensia 100.

# NATURE GROUP COMMITTEE

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*The President, Secretary and Treasurer of The Royal Photographic Society are also ex-officio members, as is the Chairman of the A & F Nature Distinctions Panel.*

# PUBLICATION INFORMATION

The IRIS is published by The Nature Group of the Royal Photographic Society three times a year. Copy and publication dates are:-

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**Contributions** on all aspects of Nature Photography are welcomed, including reviews on relevant books. Material should be typed, double spaced, on one side of the paper only. Copy can be accepted on floppy disc (preferably RTF or Microsoft 'Word') accompanied by printed copy. Please send submissions to The Editor. *No payment is made for material used and whilst every care is taken neither the Editor, nor the Nature Group, nor Printers accept liability for any damage that may occur to photographic material submitted. The views expressed are solely those of the contributor.*

**Magazine Distribution:-** The IRIS is posted using labels produced by the RPS Membership Dept in Bath. Any Nature Group member who does not receive their copy should contact the Membership Department so that their name appears on a label in the future. However the Editor will be pleased to post single copies to those who have failed to receive them.

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**Front Cover Photo** by Charles Brown ARPS - “Capercaillie” - male displaying in heather, Inverness. Canon EOS 100 with Canon 500mm K64 at f6.3.

**Back Cover Photo** by Barbara Lawton FRPS - “African Buffalo with Oxeckers”.

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## ***THE 24TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND SPRING MEETING***

The 2000 Annual General Meeting of the RPS Nature Group will be held at  
The Royal Photographic Society Headquarters The Octagon, Milsom Street, Bath.

**SATURDAY 15TH APRIL 2000**

### **TIMETABLE**

- 10.30 am.** Assemble for 11.00 am. start. Coffee and biscuits in the Members' Gallery.
- 11.00 am.** Slide Lecture 'The Wildlife of Namibia'. by Clive Rathband FRPS.
- 12.30 pm** Break for lunch. No catering arrangements have been made as there is a restaurant in The Octagon as well as many other eating places quite close at hand.
- 2.00 pm.** Annual General Meeting

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the 1999 AGM (Printed in issue 74 of The Iris).
3. Matters arising.
4. Chairman's report.
5. Treasurer's report.
6. Secretary's report.
7. To make such changes to the Constitution as required by the RPS, provided they are received in time to notify members i.e. 28 days notice.

To amend items 12.5 and 12.6 of the Constitution as follows:-

12.5 to read:- "The Treasurer alone shall sign orders for payment, withdrawals or deposits of sums of money, sell, purchase and perform all banking operations *subject to the limit referred to in 12.6. In the event of the Treasurer's incapacity items within that limit may be signed by either the Chairman or Secretary.*"

12.6 to read:- "The Group Committee will set a limit above which orders for payment, withdrawal, deposit of sums of money and all banking operations are to receive the *signatures of any two of the Treasurer, the Chairman or Secretary.*"

8. Any other business.
9. Date and Venue of the AGM for 2001. (Saturday 28th April 2001 at The Octagon).

***All notices of motion for consideration under Any Other Business must be made in writing and be received by the Secretary on or before Friday 24th March 2000.***

- 2.45 pm.** Opening of the 2000 Exhibition. The prints will be displayed in the Members' Gallery.
- 3.00 pm.** A presentation of the 2000 Exhibition slides.
- 4.00 pm.** Refreshments in the Members' Gallery.

*RPS members should be prepared to show their membership cards.  
Non-members are welcome to attend both presentations,  
they will of course be charged the normal entrance fee.*

Robert Hawkesworth ARPS Hon. Secretary

## EDITORIAL

This editorial proved extremely difficult to write (this is my third attempt). My problem being how to air the matter without offending members, which is the last thing I wish to do. The topic is, *'What do you want, who should provide it, who should support it?'*

Apologies to overseas members for concentrating on a UK matter. Also excluded from my remarks are all those members who have given so generously of their time over the years.

Sometimes heard are two disheartening phrases. They go along the lines:- 'No one organizes anything in my region' and dichotomically, 'I led a field meeting but no one came'.

Let's start with Field Meetings, or rather the lack of them. On page 30 you will find the venues that members have so far volunteered for this year. Only 11 compared to 16 last year, 20 in 1998 and 25 in 1997. *Remember those leaflets in the last issue which were to be returned by the 10th January; well I understand only around six people did so!*

Broadening out the subject to include all events over the last few years, why are some extremely well supported and others not so? What attracts members, is it the subject matter or that the leader / speaker is a 'known' name? Why will some people undertake a round trip of two hundred miles or so whilst scores living within a fifty mile radius never appear? Who should organize them, a committee member living a considerable distance away, or a local member having knowledge of suitable venues and other local members who will help?

*(A word of warning for those now reaching for their pen.* Our previous Exhibition Secretary sent out a questionnaire about the N/G Exhibition. Several replies included suggestions regarding our Group generally. A common element was that suggestions created work for someone other than the writer! Whilst some admitted this and honestly wrote that they were not prepared to undertake it, others obviously had not given a thought as to the practicality of their suggestion, the work involved, nor who would do it.)

So the dichotomy is, on the one hand there are complaints about lack of events; on the other poor support which not only discourages holding more but also means a possible financial loss. Is there a solution?

The old phrase 'many hands make light work' springs to mind. If, in each of the 16 regions, one person could arrange just one field meeting and another person one event each year (as a minimum) I think most people would be satisfied. No one could complain 'that nothing is organized in my region'. Of course we are left with a possible 'but no one came'. But if no one came they couldn't complain in future if nothing was organized for them, could they? *So how about two volunteers from each region?*

Such volunteers would be able to call on any of the committee for advice. Personally I would be very happy, wearing my Treasurer's hat, to provide financial advice regarding lectures etc., as Editor to provide promotional leaflets and address labels for mailing shots to members in local regions.

All of us in the Nature Group provide vital support by paying our annual subscription and long may we continue to do so. Some of us are content simply to receive The Iris, others expect more. To meet those expectations it is necessary to know not only what we want, but also that more of us will be prepared to organize events, and that even more of us will make them viable by attending. *SEE YOU AT THE AGM* ❀



Having said farewell to the Twentieth Century, I wonder what the Twenty-first has in store for nature photography. The last few years of the old century saw tremendous developments in photographic materials, equipment and techniques. The arrival of

finer grain films, auto-focus cameras and lenses and more recently digital imaging, have all contributed to an almost unbelievable rise in photographic quality and, in my opinion, an incredible leap forward has been witnessed in the quality of nature images. All these recent advances have generally been welcomed by most nature photographers but, can the development of materials and equipment continue at it's present rate and, if it does, where will nature photography be in twenty years time?

I feel sure that things will continue to improve photographically, but I doubt whether the same can be said for much of our subject matter - whilst we make dramatic advances in technological development, we see many wilderness areas throughout the world being plundered for short term gain. As an individual attempting to 'safeguard the planet' as much as possible, I seem to have little or no influence - the answer really lies with politicians on a global scale - I have to admit, I am not optimistic! Whatever the future holds we certainly live in interesting times and I hope that 2000 provides you all with ample good health and decent weather to pursue your interest in nature photography.

The next major events in the Nature Group calendar are the AGM and Exhibition to be held at The Octagon on April 15th, the Exhibition continues until April 25th. Special thanks are due to Tony Wharton FRPS and members of his Exhibition Committee for organising this very special Nature Group event. Roy Place has also been beavering away throughout the winter lining up a series of field meetings around the country for the coming spring and summer, please do your best to support these events. A special thank you also to Dawn Osborn who, as Vice Chairperson of the Group, will be chairing the AGM in my absence, to John Myring who continues to astound me with the amount of time he contributes to the Group as Group Treasurer and Editor of *The Iris*, to our Secretary Robert Hawkesworth who continually prompts us all and to all other Committee Members for their continued hard work on behalf of us all. Have a great year 🍀

## ***FROM THE CHAIR***

***Martin Withers FRPS***

2000 Competition

THE IRIS

FIVE SLIDE COMP

*Full details and Entry Form in Summer Issue.*

## **NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY**

### **IN UMBRIA**

*BY ANNE SUTCLIFFE ARPS*

Ever since I started entering photographs in exhibitions, I have been asked what sort of photographs I take. My usual reply is 'anything that takes my fancy'. The truth is that I was inspired to take up photography by my father who is a pictorialist and have always been interested in geology.

Consequently, my first successful photographs were of rocks photographed in a pictorial manner. In the early '90's I entered Hoodoo Magic into pictorial exhibitions and Hoodoos into nature exhibitions - different title, same slide which did equally well in both sections. Since then, I have continued to photograph geological subjects and have never yet managed to decide whether I am really a nature or a pictorial photographer.

Quoting from a recent exhibition entry form, 'nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic purpose to depict observations from all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archaeology ..... the story telling value of a photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality ..... human elements should not be present except on the rare occasion where those human elements enhance the nature story'. The rules effectively exclude humans and their buildings, ancient and modern. Am I being too controversial if I suggest that *Homo sapiens* is, after all, just another animal species and his buildings form part of his environment. He may be more intelligent than other animals but sometimes he fails to respect the great destructive power of the natural world.

In June 1999, I went to Umbria which lies to the south of Tuscany and is famous for the hill town of Assisi, the home of St Francis. As usual I took vast quantities of film and my intention was to explore the countryside and to take pictures. I had little idea what to expect and no preconceived idea of what pictures I would come home with. Although there are relatively densely populated areas in and around the Vale of Spoleto, almost half of Umbria is covered by the Apennine mountains. The Apennines are made up of limestone and layers of marl. They have weathered into conical peaks which are usually around 1500 metres high and densely forested. On top of many of them stand precariously perched, medieval walled towns. In the wilder areas, the peaks are often separated by wind-swept plateaux. In June, many of these are covered with poppies, camomile, arnica and cornflowers. Perhaps the most beautiful and certainly the most isolated plateau is the Piano Grande which lies between Monte Ventisola and Monte Sibillini. The latter mountain dominates the countryside and rises to 2500 metres. I was lucky with the weather and was treated to a blue sky with towering, fast-moving cumulus clouds which cast shadows over the ever changing landscape. Here, the ground was covered with coarse grey-green mountain grass. But most stunning of all were the carpets of yellow and purple wild flowers. I have yet to identify them but suspect they were hawkweed and spiked bellflower. The area is noted also for its bird and animal life. There are swifts and buzzards which I saw and golden eagles and wolves which I didn't.

From the nature photographer's perspective, the geology of the area is disappointing. Although the rocks form magnificent mountains which are a landscape photographer's dream, there is little that can be photographed with nature exhibitions in mind. Nevertheless, the geology of the area has had a significant impact on its photographic potential. Italy lies in the Mediterranean / Trans Asiatic seismic belt which releases approximately 15% of the earth's seismic energy. The Turkish earthquake which occurred this summer was devastating because it occurred in a densely populated area where many buildings were unable to withstand earthquake damage. Most people will probably remember this earthquake for quite a time given the huge loss of life. Some will also remember the earthquake that followed shortly afterwards in Athens and an even more recent quake in Taiwan. But how many remember the earthquake which occurred on 26th September





Photo - Anne Sutcliffe ARPS - “Umbrian Flowers”.



Photo - Anne Sutcliffe ARPS - “Structural support after an earthquake”.





Photo - Anne Sutcliffe ARPS - “Umbrian Meadow”.



Photo - Anne Sutcliffe ARPS - “Earthquake rubble”.

1997 in Umbria? Its epicentre was at Foligno where significant structural damage occurred. A large aftershock occurred one day later and killed four people in the Basilica of St Francis as they were inspecting the damage to the famous Giotto frescoes. Tremors occurred for nearly a year afterwards causing further structural damage. In total, 11 people were killed and 1000 monuments were damaged. Throughout Umbria, churches are closed and restoration proceeds apace. The Upper Basilica in Assisi has been opened in time for the millennium. What is less widely known is that according to an Internet source, 400,000 people were made homeless. If true, this represents nearly half the population of Umbria.

Driving through Umbria, two sights are common. The first is huge wooden beams being used to support the walls of numerous buildings. Many of the old villages are medieval and, at first, one thinks that the old buildings are falling down due to the ravages of time. Second, the landscape is marred by numerous Portakabin villages. These are unattractive but meticulously smooth tarmac rectangles on which sit row upon row of beige, metal cabins watched over by ranks of mighty fluorescent street lights. There are signs of community; a small bar and shop, pots of geraniums outside some cabins, old ladies on a bench watching the world go by and washing lines by the dozen. But the impression is not the usual one of a happy Italian village. I admired the Italians for their response to the Kosovan refugee crisis. Only latterly, did I realise how wrong I was.

My routes of exploration were chosen randomly and it took some time to realise that there was a band of villages (often too small to justify being marked on the map) where many buildings had collapsed and most of the remainder were uninhabitable. The Portakabin camps were located close by. Slowly, the realisation dawned. I was seeing the ongoing effects of the Umbrian earthquake. Some of the old villages were completely abandoned and the temptation to take pictures was too great. Gradually, I explored villages where some homes were still occupied and eventually, I plucked up courage to talk to the people. Using a mixture of sign language, school Latin and a smattering of English and modern Italian, I was made to understand the effects of the earthquake. Tent camps were provided first, and eventually after the cold winter weather had set in, the Portakabins. But even these were cold in winter and stiflingly hot in summer – and they were tiny compared to the houses that had been abandoned. There was little sign of work to repair the damaged dwellings but the government had promised money, but who could tell when it would be handed over. The locals obviously had little hope that help would come soon even though nineteen months had passed since they lost their homes. In contrast I, but perhaps not the villagers, was aware of the vast sums of money and human effort being poured into the repair of churches and national monuments. After that I took more photographs but this time I made a greater effort to convey the sadness of loss felt by the villagers. I was moved to tears by one house where the front wall had disappeared but the rooms remained intact. The chandelier still hung sadly from the bedroom ceiling and net curtains flapped listlessly in the breeze. In another house, doors hung off their hinges, a chair was overturned but the plug was still in the socket in the wall. At the time I was struck by the devastation that a natural event can cause in a sparsely populated area. How much worse it must be in Turkey and Taiwan.

In Italy I took pictures that attempted to show the effects of nature on man and his environment. Did I take nature photographs in Umbria? I am sure that exhibition judges would not think so. But photographing an earthquake is difficult, if not impossible. Photographing its after effects is easier but it is still difficult to convey the people's sense of loss and abandonment. And anyway, people and buildings are forbidden in nature photographs aren't they? ❀

## ***NATURE GROUP FIELD WEEKEND 2000***

***Friday 5th May to Monday 8th May 2000  
at the Burton Cliff Hotel, Burton Bradstock, Dorset***

For this third Dorset weekend we are once again fortunate to have the services of Colin Varndell as our leader, and a venue, under new management, that is ideally suited for a photographic weekend. Colin lives locally, is a highly experienced photographer, naturalist, and writer. The hotel has its own darkroom and projection facilities, is the meeting place for Bridport Camera Club, and has built up a reputation as a venue for sympathetic photography courses. The new owner is anxious to continue with this tradition.

This corner of Dorset is rich in Nature reserves and outstanding landscapes, and in early May the spring flowers and fresh green foliage should be at their best. The programme will include evening slide lectures and two whole days in the field, at the best photographic sites in the area, new ones for members who have been before. It should provide some splendid photography under expert guidance and in congenial company. Transport during the weekend will be in members own cars, so we shall need to share the driving.

The cost for the 3 night stay including full board, two whole day field trips and lectures, will vary between £120 to £150 according to the accommodation. A deposit of £25 (cheques payable to the Nature Group please) will be required on booking, non refundable unless the member's place can be filled.

***FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION & RESERVATIONS  
FOR EITHER OF THESE EVENTS  
PLEASE CONTACT  
KATH BULL ARPS - TEL 01892 - 663751***

***A WEEK IN THE SCOTTISH ISLANDS  
VISIT CRAIGLEITH, THE FARNES, BASS ROCK, ETC.,  
FOR FABULOUS BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY***

***SATURDAY 3rd to SUNDAY 11th JUNE 2000***

**SUFFICIENT MEMBERS HAVE SHOWN AN INTEREST FOR THIS TRIP TO GO  
AHEAD**

The trip will be organised by Colin Varndell and is planned as a non-profit making venture and on a job sharing principle, with everyone contributing and sharing in routine daily tasks. Members will be asked to take responsibility for such jobs as loading and packing the vehicle, organising the packed lunches, sharing the driving (at least two drivers will be needed).

The cost will be in the region of £350, including Bed & Breakfast for 8 nights, all transport, boat and landing fees. A deposit is requested, non-refundable unless the member can fill his or her place. Your deposit will be returned in full in the event of the trip being cancelled by the organiser.

**INTERESTED MEMBERS SHOULD TELEPHONE OR WRITE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.**



## NATURE DISTINCTIONS WORKSHOP

WILL BE HELD AT THE SMETHWICK PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY,  
THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE, CHURCHBRIDGE, SMETHWICK, WEST MIDLANDS  
ON SUNDAY, 23RD. JULY, 2000.

The venue is situated within a few hundred metres of Jct 2 the M5  
and has ample parking facilities

At least two members of the Nature Distinctions Panel will be present to give guidance and advice on applying for the Associateship and Fellowship of The Royal Photographic Society in the Nature category, and to assess the work of Members hoping to apply for those distinctions.

The attendance will be limited to 30 active participants and bookings will be accepted on a first-come-first-served basis, although, in addition, there will be ample room for people who wish to observe without bringing work for assessment.

Reception, with coffee and biscuits provided, will be at 10.00 am, ready for a 10.30 am start. There will be a break for lunch from 1pm to 2.00 pm. Lunch will not be provided, but the bar will be open and facilities for consuming packed lunches are available. Alternatively, good quality, inexpensive food can be obtained at "The Hardy" pub, which is 100 metres from the Old School House. Tea and light refreshments will be provided at about 4.30 pm. It is anticipated that proceedings will be drawn to a close at 5.00 pm.

**The cost is £20 each for those bringing work for assessment and £10 for others.**

*To obtain an application form, please send a S.A.E. to Barbara Lawton at her home address and return the completed form to her, together with a cheque for the appropriate amount, made payable to "The RPS Nature Group". Please also enclose a further S.A.E., so that a map showing the location of the Smethwick P.S. can be sent to confirm your booking.*

IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED      BOOK NOW

*SATURDAY 25TH MARCH 2000*

*THE NATURE GROUP, PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE*

*A MAJOR NATURE GROUP MEETING*

AT THE HAYESBROOK SCHOOL - BROOK STREET - TONBRIDGE - KENT  
10 AM TO 4 PM.

GUEST SPEAKERS:- PROFESSOR HEATHER ANGEL HON FRPS & MARTIN WITHERS FRPS

SEE PAGE 13 OF THE IRIS NO. 75 - WINTER 1999 - FOR FULL DETAILS

**COST £12 INCLUDES FINGER BUFFET WHICH MUST BE ORDERED IN ADVANCE  
TO BOOK PLEASE SEND S.A.E TO:-**

**DR. BILL BURNS-BEGG ARPS - ST. JOHN'S COTTAGE, SCHOOL LANE,  
CROWBOROUGH, EAST SUSSEX, TN6 1RD. TEL:- 01892-661335.**

## **WHY USE ...**

### **... A PICTURE LIBRARY**

*by DAVID HOSKING FRPS*

Have you ever taken a photograph that you thought was really good, made a print of it and then sent it off to the next exhibition expecting to take Gold and then had it returned unplaced? Equally have you found that the photograph that you nearly did not show was the one that got all the praise?

I think the answer to this is that we photographers find it hard to be objective about our own work. This is one of the reasons why photographic picture agencies started and now dominate the worldwide, billion dollar stock industry.

While marketing your own photographs is possible, you have to weigh up the time it takes to organise your slides, build up a client base, keep track of your slides, man the phone, know the going rate for your images. against the photo opportunities you are missing while tied to the office. It's got to be easier to send a batch of slides to your agent and then look out for the cheque. Sadly its not quite that easy, however there are more photographers making a good living from stock photographs now than ever before.

Photographic agencies are split into two groups, The General collections which aim to have the 'classic image' for every occasion and the specialist that will hold an 'in depth' collection, trying to cover every angle. You will find a specialist collection for almost every topic you can think of!

Demand for stock images has grown steadily over the last fifty years but the last decade has seen that demand mushroom thanks to new technology, making the reproduction of images much cheaper and easier.

Clients from the advertising industry can go to a stock collection and buy exclusive rights to an image for less than the cost of commissioning a photograph, so no wonder the number of stock photographers has increased. That same technology has taken the guess work out of photography and enabled large numbers of new people to take and sell their images.

Once you have signed on with an agency, they will normally want your work exclusively., It's embarrassing if a client receives the same work from two sources, its potentially costly if two different clients buy exclusive rights in an identical picture. Agents work on a 50/50 split of sales received. A good agent will more than justify his 50% by knowing the market place, what rights to sell and how much to charge. There is a big difference in the value of an image reproduced in a local county magazine and the National Geographic!

Colour has now almost totally replaced black & white in the market place. The subject should be doing something rather than being a straight portrait and, for bird photographers, nest photography is definitely not popular. The biggest demand is for the common species, but increasingly Natural History picture agencies are saying to their photographers only send the very unusual shots, otherwise don't bother sending us any more of the common subjects.

Its very difficult to estimate what return you should expect from the work you have with an agent. A few pictures of some exclusive natural wonder could bring a hugely disproportionate return compared to someone who has thousands of images of some unpopular subject. Some recent market research of Natural History picture libraries has shown that Birds & Mammals consistently out sell all other categories and that it's the photographers

with the broadest coverage who get the best return. This research also showed in a significant number of cases that photographers were receiving sales on one in a hundred images held, per year. Interestingly a similar survey in the USA had shown that one image held was worth one dollar per year in sales. The monetary value of these two sale estimations is surprisingly close.

The rapid growth of digital technology has opened a new era in the history of photography. Without a crystal ball its impossible to say how the market will change but a major proportion will be digital. Its possible that the General libraries with their financial muscle will be able to take over the specialised collections and offer 'in-depth collections' on line. Providing the customer can find and access their picture requirements through the modem on their desk they will buy wherever the best picture can be found, so get yourself a Web site..... ❀

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## ***REPORTS OF FIELD MEETINGS IN 1999***

### **Bestwood Park - Nottinghamshire-13th Oct '99 - Leader Robert Hawkesworth ARPS**

The woodlands of Bestwood Park lie to the east of the old colliery village of Bestwood a few miles north of Nottingham. The coal mine was closed in the eighties and Bestwood Park opened up to the public by Notts. County Council, it is one of the best sites in Nottinghamshire for fungi.

Eventually eighteen of us gathered in "The Headstocks" Car Park on Wednesday 13th October. I say eventually since a serious accident on the M1 caused some members to be an hour late and they didn't locate us until lunchtime. Due apologies were made to them of course and are repeated here. It would have been very difficult to leave directions under a windscreen as to where we had gone, pathways in woodlands are extremely difficult to explain to strangers. I did my best to show them some good spots in the afternoon.

One of the highlights in Bestwood is the presence of the Common Earth Star (*Geastrum triplex*). Considerable queues built up at the site not helped by the fact that growing alongside them were some examples of the Verdigris Toadstool (*Stropharia aeruginosa*). Both these species are uncommon in Nottinghamshire. One of the commonest habitats in the county is Birch wood and so Fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*) is prolific and might with some justification be called the Nottinghamshire Toadstool, some very good stands were found, some with expanded caps as large as dinner plates. Another find was a stump covered attractively with the pink and white jelly-like growths of *Merulius tremellosus* and nearby in a recently cleared area we found some good examples of Black Nightshade and White Campion (*Solanum nigrum* and *Silene alba*) both in full flower, the mild autumn no doubt responsible. Razor-strop Fungus (*Piptoporus betulinus*) and the Blushing Bracket (*Daedaleopsis confragosa*) were also located, the former in large numbers and again provided good subjects.

It goes without saying of course that we all enjoyed the day, good friends, good chat, who cares how many photographs were taken or missed, Field Meetings really are splendid ways of meeting other members. If you have yet to try one do look out for next year's programme, find one within a reasonable distance and give it a go, I'm sure you will enjoy it. To all my regular customers, many thanks for your continued support and to those who came for the first time I hope you come back for more! ❀

## **SO YOU WANT TO BE A NATURE RESERVE WARDEN ?**

BY TIM BEYNON

Well, it's not all beer and skittles. Mind you, for some, there can be a fair bit of the first, but usually only for drowning sorrows and ameliorating frustration, and at times you feel you would like to have a few of the second, preferably designed on the lines of

German Second World War stick grenades, *with* the explosive heads...

A large number of the GBP (Great British Public) think we spend all our time swanning around, delighting in birdsong, sniffing flowers, and revelling in the fresh healthy outdoors air. Would it were so. Remember Fotherington-tomas (sic) at St Custard's? He was always skipping about and saying "Hullo clouds hullo sky". Nigel Molesworth would of course add "He is a girlie and love the scents and sounds of nature tho the less I smell and hear of them the better". Wardens really have to develop the cynicism and cunning of Nigel M. with the *very* occasional chance to indulge in the Fotherington-tomas delights.

But you do get to meet the GBP in all its manifold diversity. What would your reaction be to the following, all genuine? The middle aged man with his well filled supermarket carrier bag, who you later find elsewhere on the Reserve in full armour, (underbody, female), well up in a mature hawthorn, waving to the passing dog walkers?; or the pair of not-shaved-for-a-week individuals with small shovels strapped to their backs, empty sacks in one hand and leads to three terriers in the other, who claim they are "just out for a walk"; or even when you have to investigate reports of a "flasher", claimed to be on a *bicycle*. You probably hope it has a racing saddle.

You can cope with those children who pick an armful of bluebells — after all there are lots about. You need to point out that they are breaking the law, and that if everyone picked an armful there would be few left for others to enjoy. But what do you say to the elderly, blue rinsed, and well-dressed lady you meet, who is carrying about forty flowering orchid spikes? You might be tempted to tell her the truth, that the penalty is about £x000 per spike, but then you think "heart attack", and imagine the problems of getting the emergency services to the site of her collapse. She is of course innocent, if ignorant, and quite upset, and she offers to put them back, and you mutter *sotto voce* "super glue?" She will probably never do it again, which cannot be said for another elderly couple you meet near the orchid site, again with a supermarket bag. When you ask, as you have every right to do, to look into the bag they become abusive, but finally show you. Inside are a few groceries and a clean garden trowel. Although still suspicious, you apologise and explain why you have to ask, and lay it on a bit about the fines plant diggers might face.

It's only later in the day that you think to go back and have a good search amongst the

*Continued on page 21*

### **PORTFOLIO - CHARLES BROWN ARPS**

*On occasions I hope to feature a portfolio of pictures from a Nature Group member without any related text.*

*Charles was good enough to provide a selection of pictures which appear on the front page, page 2 and pages 17 to 20 inclusive.*





Photo - Charles Brown ARPS - "Barn Owl" with 3 flash heads. Canon 100-300 at 150mm f8 with Sensia 100.



Photo - Charles Brown ARPS - "Black-browed Albatross" with Canon EOS 100 Canon 100-300mm at 100mm f8 with Sensia 100.



Photo - Charles Brown ARPS - "Siskin" - fill-in flash. Canon 100-300 at 150mm



Photo - Charles Brown ARPS - "Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl" - Texas





Photo - Charles Brown ARPS - "Magellanic Snipe" Falkland Isles. Canon L 500mm at f8 with Sensia 100



*“So you Want to be a Nature Reserve Warden” continued from page 16*

orchids. Now you find a few neat round holes in the bog and several dug up plants thrown down amongst the others. You do the best you can to replant them. Had you found them at the time you would still have no proof that the couple were the diggers, but you wish you had pointed out earlier that orchids dug up and replanted in gardens will almost certainly die without their associated mycorrhiza

Of course Reserves differ greatly. You could be based in some remote area where you are rarely exposed to the GBP. Initially that can be really very pleasurable, but after a time you do need to have some sort of human contact, some sort of appreciation of what you are trying to do, or even the odd set-to. Some wardens can become quite odd after long periods on their own. Even if your contact for the day is someone complaining about your felling trees: “I thought you were supposed to be protecting things, not killing them”, at least you have the opportunity to try to explain that you are trying to open up a few patches in the wood for the benefit of the ground flora. It’s even more rewarding when six months later you meet them again, and they admit that the bluebells in the opened area are taller, denser, and brighter than those still under a heavy canopy. It compensates for the nearly 20 tonnes of *casual* litter you hand pick each year, and whose disposal costs nearly a third of your meagre budget; the two or three stolen and burned-out cars you have to dispose of each month, and the resulting fence repairs; the graziers who think that the fields here and there on the Reserve are for their benefit, rather than that their horses are acting as conservation tools for the benefit of the wildflowers.

Don’t even think of becoming a warden if you want financial reward — you will be amongst the lowest paid of the lowest paid. You do it, often, because you want to and believe strongly it is something worth doing. You get a good, sometimes I have to admit smug, feeling when you are out of doors, doing something physical, when you think of colleagues stuck in stifling overheated offices mindlessly moving paper from one tray to another, with nothing to look forward to except doing the same tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow.. There is variety in wardening, not least because you are very dependent on the weather. Some of the attraction is because you often have to decide what should be done on the day. In emergencies of course, you work whatever the weather — you cannot not mend a fence to a horse paddock because it is raining, nor can you not attend a reported fire because it is out of “office” hours. Overall it can be very satisfying, especially when some regime you have instituted seems to work: the bluebells in the cleared areas, *and* the fungi on the felled trunks; the rare butterflies whose populations increase because of a particular mowing or coppicing scheme, or planting their special food plant; even the obvious benefit to the small denizens of a pond after the Environment Agency electrofish out all the illegally introduced fish!

You can get occasional “days off” too, when you *can* decide to say “Hullo clouds, hullo sky”. Instead of fencing or litter picking or clearing burned-out gorse, you can explore more thoroughly parts of your fiefdom. There will always be areas which you cover less regularly than others, and when you decide to have a thorough visit all sorts of exciting things can turn up; rare flowers, new insects, even evidence of new and unexpected mammals. I well remember taking a visitor to a pond, to which you could get by vehicle. As we got out we were greeted by little bouncing tangerine-winged dragonflies, which I had last seen many many years before in southern France. They were Yellow-winged Darters which had migrated in to the east coast from the continent, and then spread westward through the country. There are enough of these events to compensate for the times when you begin to despair of the collective intelligence and future of your fellow human beings.

So you want to be a Warden? Give it a try ☘

## **“NEWSLETTER” TO “JOURNAL” TO “THE IRIS”**

*continuing a journey through the years culled from the pages of past issues.*

### **NEWSLETTER No. 3 - OCTOBER 1976**

This was a twenty, A4, page issue, not illustrated, stapled once in the top left corner. The first paragraph reported that in the eight months since the inaugural meeting membership had grown to 170.

Also on the front page were several requests, one of which was:- ‘... *Could you:- 1. Lead a day or weekend field trip or merely suggest a suitable area. You may not be an expert photographer or naturalist but you could act as a local organizer / guide.*’ A familiar annual request which continues to this day and is still as vital. Later in the issue there was a reminder to members about the ethics of nature photography and a reference to a sign at Slapton Ley which read ‘*Take only photographs, leave only footprints.*’

The first in a proposed series of articles on Natural History photography appeared. Entitled “*Birds at Bait*” its author was Tony Bond FRPS. Tony has continued to contribute articles on various subjects; his latest appeared in issue No. 74 - Summer ‘99 some 23 years later. Now that is what I call dedication.

There were reports of various lectures, field meetings and details of forthcoming events. In one of the latter the following caught my eye. It was in the notice of a trip to Jarrold’s Printing Works and contained the following sentence. ‘*There will be an introductory illustrated talk covering various aspects of colour photography and printing, such as chromatic aberration shake caused by SLR mirrors, telephoto lenses and alcohol or over excitement and its effect on the image.*’ ‘Alcohol or over excitement’? These bring a whole new concept for field trips, just let your mind toy with the possibilities.

The first lecture of the Nature Group was given by Geoff Moon ARPS on 20th July ‘76. Geoff, a leading nature photographer in New Zealand, specializing in native birds with several books to his name. The audience was clearly enthralled by the lecture. [*I’m pleased to report that Geoff, now an O.B.E, is still a member and wrote to me last July*].

The above lecture had been introduced by Heather Angel FRPS. A ‘STOP PRESS’ item reported the RPS Council award of the Hood Medal to Heather for ‘her contributions to the advancement of nature photography through her books, her teaching, her exhibition work and her encouragement of other nature photographers’. Heather is just as enthusiastic today [*see opening paragraph of “A Nature Group Rookie” on page 26 of the last issue*] and will be one of the main lecturers at “The Nature Group Past, Present & Future” on 25th March 2000.

The last two pages gave additions to the list of members and whilst it is invidious to single any person out I must mention someone who gave so much pleasure and inspired so many nature photographers, Eric Hosking Hon. FRPS.

### **NEWSLETTER NO. 4 - FEBRUARY**

In the same format as No. 3 but with a large, bold type, framed title. This shorter edition (8 pages) opened with the Chairman’s Annual Report.

Most of its contents related to reports of meetings and details of forthcoming events one of which was Kenfig Nature Reserve. Kenfig has proved to be a favourite with many of our members and has featured annually in recent years. Another proposed trip was a field

weekend in Roxburghshire border country led by Ken Taylor ARPS. A range of accommodation was detailed with Farmhouse accommodation at £3.75 for Dinner, Bed and Breakfast. For those who liked their creature comforts the same was offered at the Crown Hotel, Langholm for £7. During the weekend it was hoped to see Blackcock at lek and stalk Wild Goats.

Congratulations were offered to Eric Hosking Hon FRPS who previously accepted an Honorary Membership of the Nature Group and subsequently had his services to Nature Photography and Conservation recognized by being awarded the O.B.E. in the New Years Honours list.

The Newsletter ended with notice for the AGM on 17th March 1977 ❀

## WEB SITES

I am indebted to A. B. Apana LRPS both for the provision of the following site details but also the patience shown in having to send so many E-mails due to my ignorance of html.

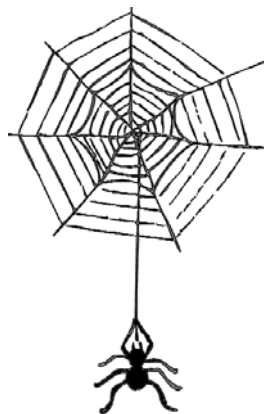
<http://www.rue.com> - The LL Rue website with an excellent photo-vest and gadgets such as their 'plamp'. This is a plant clamp which attaches to the tripod and is used to hold plants on windy days.

<http://www.kirkphoto.com> - Another site with useful gadgets such as quick release plates and flash brackets as used by John Shaw.

<http://www.wildlight.com> - an on-line magazine on nature / outdoor photography. Currently covering the NANPA 2000 summit.

<http://www.vestedinterest.com> - Photo-vests which are really wear-on backpacks.

**STOP PRESS:-** HEATHER ANGEL HON. FRPS HAS JUST LAUNCHED A WEB SITE - SEE PAGE 29.



### OTHER CAPTIONS ?

*A NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER  
ALWAYS KNOWS EXACTLY  
WHERE TO FIND THE  
SUBJECT'.*

*'FIELD LEADER LOOKING  
FOR LOST MEMBERS'.*

See Editorial. Could the  
present caption refer to  
unsupported Field  
Leaders?

WHAT WOULD YOUR  
CAPTION BE?

## MEMBERS' LETTERS

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

Dear Editor,

In your recent editorial (Issue 75) you invited some feedback regarding “anomalies” and the use of artificial backgrounds. Well here goes ...

Of course there are many ways to alter a background both in the field and subsequently, a computer being just one of them. But why restrict the argument to backgrounds? Foregrounds can also be altered, or indeed the subject itself can be relocated to different surroundings. In fact there are so many options open to the photographer that it would not be realistic to discuss each of them separately. Clearly there are totally straight shots where absolutely nothing has been altered, and there are studio shots where everything is controlled; in between there is a large grey area into which the majority of nature shots probably fall. Consider the following fictional scenario:-

*“A Day in the Life of a Nature Photographer”:-* A nature photographer sets out on a rather grey afternoon to photograph some fungi. His path takes him first into a beech wood, where he finds a nice group of *Mycena* on an old log. He photographs the log against a background of beech leaves with a standard lens. Spotting a discarded crisp packet in the frame, he removes it and takes another shot. The light is very low, so he ties back a nearby branch to let more light in and also uses a reflector. Concerned that camera shake will ruin the shots, he takes yet another with a small flashgun.

Moving in closer now with a macro lens, he sees that one of the *Mycena* is badly damaged; he removes it along with some dried grass which has stuck to the log. He takes a shot, but realises that the exposure time is now excessive for his brand of film. He picks up the log and takes it into a clearing where the light is better. The log fills the frame so he does not have to consider the background.

Putting the log into his basket for later identification, he continues his walk into an area of mixed deciduous woodland. Here he finds an *Amanita* beneath an old oak tree. He removes a few twigs from around the base of the fungus and covers a patch of mud with a little moss before photographing it with a macro lens.

The background is rather messy he thinks, so he takes another shot, this time using an out-of-focus dock leaf to provide a more or less plain green background. Thinking that brown would complement the *Amanita* better than green, he replaces the leaf with his jacket for the next shot. He selects a wide aperture to keep the jacket completely unrecognisable.

Deciding it would look even better against a more natural background, he picks the *Amanita* and re-plants it a few feet away; the oak tree now serves as the background for this shot. He moves an acorn into the frame to give more foreground interest and takes another shot. Rejecting the acorn idea, he replaces it for the next shot with a few fallen oak and birch leaves which are within easy reach. Another shot is taken of the same scene using now two reflectors and a fill-flash to improve the lighting. His next shot is similar, but this time he holds a bit of grass in front of the lens - this will blur the near foreground and improve the image.



He adds the Amanita to his collecting basket and follows the path out into an area of open moor. The weather has changed now and the lighting much improved. Spotting a picture opportunity, he props the Amanita up against some heather which luckily still has some colour in it; this gives an attractive picture. He now adds to the foreground a red maple leaf which he collected from the local park earlier - even more colourful he thinks.

Seeing the sun light up the distant fell tops, he switches now to a wide-angle lens. The extra space in the foreground is filled with the beech log for this shot. His final shot of the day is the sun setting behind the oak wood; he uses a double-exposure technique to greatly enlarge the apparent size of the sun.

With the sun now disappearing below the horizon, our photographer returns home. Here he photographs each of his fungus specimens laid flat against a plain grey card using two studio lights. These he thinks will help with possible future identification.

After processing the films he decides the best shot is the wide-angle one, taken late in the day on the moor. He thinks the background could be improved though, and decides to replace it (we will not concern ourselves with exactly how he does this). He selects a background of alpine summits, taken on last year's holiday to Mont Blanc. Hooray! At last he has a winning picture. *The End*

There are many possible questions arising from this little story, but I will ask just two:-  
1) Our fictional photographer now has a box full of slides. Exactly which ones are "straight" pictures and which should be labelled as "taken under controlled conditions"?  
2) At what point did he abandon nature photography and enter the world of fantasy?

Regarding the first question, my answer is that I am not sure. Apart from the very first and last pictures which are obvious, I simply do not know where the line should be drawn. I am not even sure that it really matters. I am much more concerned with the second question.

To the second question I will offer a definite opinion: Our photographer has crossed the line at the point when he photographs the Amanita against the heather. This is the first time that day that he has included an identifiable element (the heather) in the picture which is out of keeping with the subject. I realise that some of his actions prior to that may meet with disapproval from some photographers, but in my opinion it is the inclusion of the heather which really marks the point at which nature photography has ceased. After this of course things just get worse, except that is for the studio shots. Studio shots of this nature do have a place for illustrative purposes - clearly those taken by our fictional photographer will never be mistaken for anything shot in the wild, even if he neglects to label them as studio shots.

The key to my argument is identifiable element. By this I mean anything anywhere in the picture which is out of keeping with the subject matter. It could take the form of an inappropriate species (heather), environment (moor-land), or even a specific location (Mont Blanc). It could also take the form of distortion of the main subject itself (the sun).

In conclusion, I offer the following statement of opinion:-Nature photographs should not include any identifiable elements which are not appropriate to the subject or each other. How they get there is not relevant.

If a photographer is uncertain as to what is appropriate and what isn't, he should play safe. Conversely, unidentifiable elements such as a fuzzy background are acceptable. Again, it does not matter how they get there.

Perhaps readers would now like to go back to the two questions above. How would you answer them?

Yours sincerely, Nick Jarvis (Milton Keynes)

## **WIDE ANGLE WILDLIFE**

*BY GEOFF TRINDER ARPS.*

I have been photographing wildlife for about twenty five years and during that time I have accumulated and disposed of more equipment than I am prepared to admit to; my wife might read this! I have now settled on using Nikon equipment. This comprises two bodies and lenses ranging from 20 mm to 500 mm. The Nikon 500 mm f4 is a superb lens which enables photography of most subjects without having to approach too closely; if you add a 1.4x or even 2x teleconverter it is still capable of producing excellent results.

For every plus there is usually a minus and in the case of the 500 mm f4 the considerable bulk and weight can be a real burden if it has to be carried far or for any length of time. To my mind there is one other drawback. To me, photographing wildlife is my excuse for getting as close as possible without upsetting the species in question.

'Where is this taking us,' you may ask. Well instead of using a big, heavy, long lens why not try using a wide angle for a change? At a fraction of the weight and, dare I say, cost, and to get a useful image size, a close approach is vital. It sounds great as an idea but the problems start once you try and get that close!

Most people have used a wide angle lens for photographing plants but, of course, plants just sit there! If you are lucky, some other species may allow a close approach, particularly if you are interested in insects. I personally like the results this gives when a butterfly is the subject. It puts them in habitat and gives a refreshingly different result to a close-up which could have been taken in a studio. I don't have anything against pictures of this kind as I have often done it myself and the results can be stunning.

The picture of the common blue butterfly was taken with a 24 mm lens, lying down with the camera on the ground. The butterfly then sat there while I changed to a 105 mm micro lens, mounted everything on a tripod, attached a cable release and took some more pictures. If only all subjects were so approachable and obliging!

Moving on from butterflies, it seemed that it would be worth trying something which was going to be a little more of a challenge. Having a badger set quite close to my home I decided it would be worth trying to get some wide angle shots as a contrast to the usual medium or long telephoto that I had taken previously. As movement, and noises caused by movement, will easily spook badgers it was necessary to get the badgers to come to me rather than trying to sneak up on them.

Everybody knows that blue tits like peanuts - well, so do badgers, and this is the way to succeed. A trail of peanuts leading from around the set entrance to a depression in the ground also filled with peanuts (the depression so that the peanuts don't show) would, with luck, get the badgers where I wanted them. On other occasions, I have also hidden peanuts behind a low ridge of soil which means the badgers do not have to lower their heads so far. I always handle the peanuts so that the badgers become aware of my scent. This, in my view, means that if you make regular visits the badgers get to the point where your scent is part of their surroundings and they will eventually accept your presence even when the wind is in the wrong direction.

At this point it is worth bearing in mind that this stage is only reached after many visits, by which time the badgers have become accustomed to clicking cameras and sudden bursts of light from flashguns. Assuming this has been achieved we can return to using a wide angle lens. I decided it would not be possible to actually hold the camera myself and would need some method of triggering it from about twelve feet away.



Photo - Geoff Trinder ARPS - "Badger" 24mm lens using remote release  
Inset shows set up with wide angle lens and Badger eating peanuts.





Photo - Geoff Trinder ARPS - "Common Blue Butterfly" with 24mm lens.  
Camera resting on the ground.



Photo - Geoff Trinder ARPS - "Badger" with short zoom set around 35mm.  
Hand held lying on ground.



Nikon produce an item labelled an ML-3 (more expense!), which is an infrared remote release having a range of about twelve feet. Now, armed with an F90X, 24 mm lens, ML-3, various tripods, a music stand, an SB-24 flashgun and, of course, a supply of peanuts, I was ready to depart for the badger set. In the summer badgers are often above ground two or three hours before the sun goes down so it is necessary to get there early, 6-7pm in June, July and August being about right.

On arriving at the set the camera with 24 mm lens was mounted on a Benbo tripod and positioned low to the ground to get a badger's eye view. The ML-3 was attached to the camera and, instead of using the hot shoe, it was fixed to the tripod using masking tape. This left the hot shoe free to attach a remote flash cord, enabling the flashgun to be held above and slightly behind the camera. I use music stands to hold flashguns off camera as they are light and take up less space than a tripod.

Peanuts were then placed behind a low ridge of soil with a small number leading to the set entrance about twelve feet away. Having switched everything on and checked that it was all working, I retired to about twelve feet behind the camera with a clear view of where I hoped the badgers would appear. It was, of course, necessary to prefocus the camera on the area where I hoped the badgers would be!

I was lucky and didn't have long to wait. The first time I set everything up the badger appeared after only ten minutes. I couldn't see the set entrance but was aware of the badger because of the snuffling sound as it found the first peanuts; badgers are very noisy eaters! A few seconds later it was in position in front of the camera which I fired with infrared remote. The badger didn't even raise its head until I had taken four more pictures. Within a few minutes the film was used up and the badger had consumed all the peanuts and disappeared back in the direction of the set. I had another camera body with me loaded with film but no spare film. Furthermore, the other body couldn't be fired using the ML-3 so I put some more peanuts out and decided to lie on the ground about six feet away to see if the badger would accept me being so close. I mounted a 35-70 mm zoom on the camera and, to my amazement, the badger reappeared within five minutes. I took several pictures and the badger totally ignored me so, very cautiously, I edged forward using my elbows. As I got closer, I continued to take pictures until I was only one foot away from the badger, which continued eating peanuts with its head down. I eventually clicked my tongue and, on the third click, the badger raised its head and I got a couple of pictures with the lens now close to the 35 mm setting.

Since that occasion I have photographed badgers many times and it is not unusual for them to approach within touching distance. They often reach up to sniff the flashguns (I now usually use two) and, on several occasions, they have come up and sniffed the leg of the tripod within inches of my feet. I always think it is a privilege to take pictures of wild creatures, but to have badgers so close can only be described as a magical experience.

All you need is lots of patience - and don't forget the peanuts! ❀



LATE DETAILS OF A NEW WEB SITE  
'NATURAL VISIONS' has just been launched by Heather Angel Hon FRPS. Designed by her son, Giles, it will be expanded and updated regularly. Check out hundreds of natural stock images from Heather and her associates.

Animals; Amphibians; Earth; Environment; Insects;  
Marine Life; Plants; Weather Natural Designs; etc.,

**[www.naturalvisions.co.uk](http://www.naturalvisions.co.uk)**



MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO GIVE FULL SUPPORT  
TO THESE MEETINGS.

*Unless specifically stated otherwise assume that it will be an all day meeting. ALWAYS take stout walking shoes & wellingtons, also a packed lunch and drink. Check individual meeting details for any other requirements. New members will appreciate that given the vagaries of our climate anticipated subject matter cannot be guaranteed!*

## MAY

### **Wednesday 10th May - Cressbrook Dale & Tansley Dale - Peak District.**

*Meet:-* 10 am at the head of the dales lay by on the A623, just west of B6465 junction. Grid ref sheet 119- 179 757.

*Interest:-* early spring limestone flowers and good landscapes. Be prepared to move a short distance to another site in the afternoon.

*Leader:-* Robert Hawkesworth ARPS Tel:- 0115-928-1050.

### **Wednesday 31st May - Aston Clinton Ragpits, Nr. Aylesbury, Bucks.**

*Meet:-* 10 am at Aston Hill Woods car park. From Aylesbury take the A41T east towards Hemel Hempstead, after about 3 miles turn right onto A4011 towards Wendover. After 1 mile turn left into minor road (signed Wendover Woods). Car park is ½ mile on left.

Grid ref sheet 165 - SP 891 101. *WELLINGTONS MIGHT BE NEEDED FOR AFTERNOON.*

*Interest:-* Chalk grassland with several orchid species including fragrant and pyramidal. Butterflies include chalkhill blue, Duke of Burgundy. Afternoon venue decided on day.

*Leader:-* Nick Jarvis Tel:-01908-607257.

## JUNE

### **Saturday 3rd June - Horner Woods and Moorland - Exmoor - Somerset.**

*Meet:-* 10.30 am car park Horner, near Porlock. Grid ref 898 455 - OS sheet 181 or Pathfinder 1215.

*Interest:-* Ancient woodland, excellent for lichens (nationally important site). Moorland for Red Deer and possible Heath Fritillary sites. *WATERPROOFS SUGGESTED.*

*Leader:-* David Manners ARPS Tel:- 01823-252099.

### **Sunday 4th June - Oxwich, South Gower, West Glamorgan.**

*Meet:-* 10 am Car park at Oxwich Grid ref 502 864 - OS 1:50,000.

*Interest:-* Marine life of seashore, flowers and insects of dune system. *SHOES FOR PADDLING IN OR WELLINGTONS. SUN CREAM & HAT. Cost £2.50 for car park.*

*Leader:-* Margaret Hodge FRPS Tel:-01792-207001.

### **Sunday 25th June - Kingsbury Water park, Bodymoor Heath, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.**

*Meet:-* 10 am at main entrance car park by visitors centre. OS sheet 139 grid ref:- 205 965. *Cost car park fees approx £2.*

*Interest:-* Dragonflies, butterflies and wild flowers, particularly Bee, Southern Marsh and Common Spotted Orchids.

*Leader:-* Roy Place FRPS Tel:-0121-308-4162.

## **JULY**

### **Saturday 8th July - Millers Dale, Derbyshire.**

*Meet:-* 10 am Millers Dale car park (old railway station). Grid ref:- SK 140 734.

*Cost -* there is a car parking fee.

*Interest:-* Limestone flora and butterflies also some excellent scenery.

*Leader:-* Dawn Osborn ARPS Tel:- 01889-881928.

### **Sunday 9th July - Monkwood Nature Reserve, Near Worcester.**

*Meet:-* 10 am at Monkwood car park. Grid ref:- SO 804 806 map 150.

*Interest:-* Woodland, grassland, ponds all excellent for both insects and plants. It is hoped that a moth trap will have been set up nearby to provide early morning subjects. Please try to arrive in good time. STRICTLY LIMITED TO 20 - ADVANCE BOOKING NECESSARY. *Cost £1 donation to Worcs Wildlife Trust.*

*Leader:-* Tony Wharton FRPS Tel:- 0121-550 3326.

## **OCTOBER**

### **Sunday 1st October - Alvecote pools, Nr Tamworth, Staffordshire.**

*Meet:-* 10 am at Alvecote Priory car park which is on Roby's Lane off the B5000 Tamworth to Polesworth Road.

*Interest:-* Fungi and autumn colours.

*Leader:-* Frank Young ARPS Tel:- 01827-284862.

### **Sunday 8th October - Stockgrove Park and King's Wood near Milton Keynes, Bucks.**

*Meet:-* 10 am at Stockgrove Park, from Milton Keynes take the A5T south east towards Dunstable. After about 5 miles turn right onto the A418 towards Leighton Buzzard. After 1 mile turn right into minor road (signed Stockgrove Park). Car park is ½ mile on the left. Grid ref:- SP 920 294 OS map 165.

*Interest:-* Fungi and autumn colour.

*Leader:-* Nick Jarvis Tel:- 01908-607257.

### **Saturday 14th October - Ebernoe Common National Reserve, West Sussex.**

*Meet:-* 10 am car park next to Ebernoe Church. Grid ref:- 197 SU 976 278. Take A283 and 3 ½ miles north of Petworth (1 ½ miles south of Northchapel) turn east into minor road signposted Ebernoe. 1 ½ miles along this road turn right just past telephone and post boxes into Church and Reserve access road signposted 'Ebernoe Church / Schoolhouse'. *Cost £1 to reserve funds.*

*Interest:-* Ancient Woodland with over 600 recorded species of fungi.

*Leader:-* John Fairbank ARPS Tel:- 01273-732589.

### **Tuesday 17th October - Padley Gorge, Peak District.**

*Meet:-* 10 am at marked roadside parking on B6521, north of Grindleford. Grid ref:- 258 800 junction of sheets 119 and 110 (sorry). *Interest:-* Fungi, autumn colours, mountain streams, moorland landscapes and gritstone rocks. After lunch we may move to Curbar Edge. *Cost £1 car park fee at Curbar none at Padley* WATERPROOFS RECOMMENDED.

*Leader:-* Robert Hawkesworth ARPS Tel 0115-928 1050.

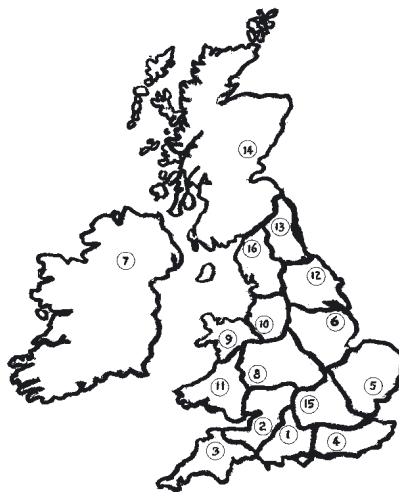


# NATURE GROUP MEMBERSHIP DETAILS AS AT 31/12/1999

## REGION & NUMBER OF MEMBERS

1. Southern	54
2. Western	33
3. South Western	17
4. South Eastern	94
5. East Anglia	45
6. East Midlands	33
7. Ireland	4
8. West Midlands	92
9. North Wales	7
10. North Western	47
11. South Wales	23
12. Yorkshire	20
13. North East	15
14. Scotland	21
15. Thames Valley	74
16. Cumbria	10
Overseas	56

Total 645



The membership includes 4 Honorary FRPS - 88 FRPS - 206 ARPS - 145 LRPS

## 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.,*

## HOSKING TOURS

### NATURE PHOTOGRAPHIC HOLIDAYS

Destinations in our present programme include:- **Arizona & Grand Canyon, Namibia, Italian Alps, Kenya, Namaqualand South Africa, Appalachian Mountains USA, Canadian Rockies, Galapagos Islands, Falkland Islands, Tanzania and Costa Rica.**

Additional destinations are being researched continually.

For brochures and itineraries contact:-

**David Hosking FRPS**

**Pages Green House, Wetheringsett, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 5QA.**

**Tel:-01728-861113 Fax:- 01728-860222**

**E-mail David@hosking-tours.co.uk**

**Web:- <http://www.hosking-tours.co.uk>**

## **PHOTOGRAPH WOLVES - IN ENGLAND!**

**MIKE WILKES FRPS**

Mike will be leading a one day Practical Photography Course on **8TH APRIL**. The course will be based at Wolf Watch UK Centre at Bishops Castle, Shropshire. There will be opportunity to photograph Canadian, European and North American wolves.

*THIS IS A CHARITY DAY WITH PROFITS BEING DONATED TO THE CENTRE.*

The centre rescues and re-homes wolves.

**COST £60 INCLUDING LUNCH. FOR MORE INFORMATION TEL:-01926-842413.**

## **ONE DAY - NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS**

**WITH GEOFF TRINDER ARPS and CHRIS MATTISON FRPS**

**SATURDAY MAY 27TH 2000 AND SUNDAY JULY 16TH 2000**

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF PHOTOGRAPHY AT GEOFF'S TWO-ACRE WILDLIFE GARDEN  
IN BELTON, NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE.

Introductory slide presentation. Expert help throughout the day.  
Ponds, meadows and woodland. Studio work with captive species.  
Morning coffee, etc., and buffet lunch included.

*PRICE £40 INCLUSIVE - NUMBERS STRICTLY LIMITED*

FOR MORE DETAILS CALL 01427-872051 OR 0114-2364433

## **NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR WITH ROBERT CANIS ARPS**

**"LAPLAND / FINLAND" - 22ND MAY to JUNE 1ST 2000**

Once again I am leading a trip to this fabulous location and have just a few places available. This is a unique opportunity to photograph wild Brown Bears near the Russian border, Lynx and Wolf as well as Whooper Swans, Cranes, Bean Geese etc.,

Small Group size, professional guides, excellent value for money.

Full details from Robert Canis ARPS. Tel / Fax 01795-477017

E-mail:- [rbm@canis.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:rbm@canis.fsnet.co.uk)

## **NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY PRO-TOURS & WORKSHOPS**

WITH PROFESSIONAL NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER

**GEORGE MCCARTHY**

### **PHOTOGRAPHERS ONLY TOURS**

**APRIL 2000 - ISLAND OF LESVOS      JUNE 2000 - BRITAINS WILD ISLANDS**

**FEB 2001 - FLORIDA & THE EVERGLADES**

### **WORKSHOPS 2000**

**MARCH - REPTILES INCLUDING ADDERS      JUNE - SEABIRD PHOTOGRAPHY**

**JULY - BUTTERFLIES & DRAGONFLIES      SEPT- FUNGI WEEKEND NEW FOREST**

**OCT - DEER IN RICHMOND PARK      OCT - BIRDS OF PREY INCLUDING OWLS**

**NOV - BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY MASTERCLASS**

NOTE THAT THE WORKSHOPS ARE RUN IN CONJUNCTION WITH QUEST WORKSHOPS  
TEL 01323-897812 FOR FULL DETAILS.

TOUR DETAILS FROM GEORGE MCCARTHY AT:-  
NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY PRO-TOURS. 12 SEARLES VIEW HORSHAM  
WEST SUSSEX TEL 01403 257917 FAX 01403 267503

## DAVID OSBORN FRPS, EFIAP

NATURALIST, WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER & LECTURER

David has organised and will be leading more of his successful Photo-Tours for:-

**FALKLAND ISLANDS. Departing 13th November 2000.** *"A JOURNEY SOUTH"* for 17 days amongst the mag-  
of the Falklands, visiting  
tograph Penguin, Elephant  
species in close proximity

**FALKLANDS SOLD OUT!**  
NOW PRE-BOOKING FOR 2001

nificent wilderness areas  
dless opportunities to pho-  
Seal and a host of other  
in a beautiful setting.

**CENTRAL NEPAL. Departing 23rd February 2001.** Another fabulous Photo-travel  
Tour of the wildlife and culture *"The Search for the One-horned Rhino"* offers a won-  
derful opportunity to experience this beautiful and magical country.

SMALL GROUP TOURS, DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR NATURE PHOTOGRAPHERS AVAILABLE.

CALL OR WRITE NOW FOR FURTHER DETAILS TO:- **DAVID OSBORN FRPS**

**5, Crompton Close, Little Haywood, Stafford, ST18 0YS**

**Tel:- 01889-881928.**

## COURSES, WORKSHOPS AND PHOTO TOURS IN 2000 BY TONY WHARTON FRPS

**Apr. 2 - 9 Southern Spain** *"Spring in Andalucia"*. Details from: Los Molinos Centro  
di Fotografia, Molino Becceril, 29710 Periana, Malaga, Andalucia, Spain Tel / Fax:-  
UK (01386) 841715 Esp 00 34 95 20 30 290.

**Apr. 20 - 24 Orielton Field Centre** *"Nature Photography in Early Spring"*. Details  
from:- Centre Director, Orielton Field Centre, Pembroke, Pembrokeshire, SA71 5EZ  
Tel:- (01646) 661335.

**May 19 - 26 Blencathra Centre, Cumbria** *"Spring Nature Photography"*. Details  
from:- Centre Director, Blencathra Centre, Threlkeld, Keswick, Cumbria. CA12 4SG  
Tel:- (01768) 779601.

**Jun 9 - 11 Losehill Hall, Castleton,** *"Focus on Nature" - Nature Photography in  
Spring*. Details from:- The Principal, Peak District National Park Centre, Losehill Hall,  
Castleton, Derbyshire, S30 2WB Tel:- (01433) 620373.

**Jun 24 - Jul. 1 Seefeld, Austrian Tyrol** *"Landscapes and Wild Flowers"*. A different  
locale for my alpine flower trip this year -but one which is no less beautiful and spec-  
tacular than my usual Swiss one. Details from:- Photo Travellers PO Box 58,  
Godalming, Surrey, GU7 2SE Tel:-01483-425448.

**Jul 28 - Aug 4 Flatford Mill Field Centre, Suffolk** *"The Seeing Eye"* - A general  
colour photography course. Details from:- Centre Director, Flatford Mill Field Centre,  
East Bergholt, Colchester, Essex, C07 6UL Tel:- (01206) 298283.

**Sep 1 - 16 (approx dates) The Okavango Delta, Botswana** *"Wildlife of the  
Okavango"* The trip also includes visits to the Chobe National Park and to Victoria  
Falls. Details from:- Photo Travellers .(see above).

**Sep 22 - 25 Preston Montford Field Centre** *"Autumn Nature Photography"*  
Details from:- Centre Director, Preston Montford Field Centre, Montford Bridge,  
Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 IDX Tel:- (01743) 850380.

**Oct. 20 - 23 Blencathra Centre, Cumbria.** *"Autumn Nature Photography"*  
Details from:- Centre Director (see above).

**Nov. 3 - 5 Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire** *"Autumn Nature Photography"*  
Details from:- The Principal (see above).



Photo - Geoff Trinder ARPS - "Strawberry Hedgehog" Arizona - 20mm lens.



