

PHOTOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Iss 4 - Autumn 2013



CONTENTS:

- Contents

 Results from recent competitions
- 2 Diary Dates Trips
- 3 Fresh Frame Return Visits
- 5 Digital DarkroomPost Processing a Kestral in Lightroom
- 7 On Location
 Phil Holroyd tells us about his trip to Scotland
- 9 Gallery
 Members images from our recent trips
- 15 Tripods Some pointers on keeping steady
- 17 Lighting Logbook
 Simple Key and Kick Portraits

Last Glance
A final image on the back cover

Jaguar Photographic Society

Website: www.jaguarps.co.uk

Email: jaguarphotosociety@yahoo.co.uk

Twitter: @jaguarphotosoc

Facebook: Jaguar Photographic Society

Meetings: Weds evenings from 20:00hrs
Jaguar Bowling Club, Kinlet Close, Coventry

Cover Image: Helen Jackson

Greenfinch

Copyright: All images remain the copyright of their respective authors. No reproduction in part or in whole is permitted without prior written permission of the author.

COMMENT

Welcome to this, the first of the newsletters for this season. I hope we have a good season and everyone continues to have fun at the club and on the practical events.

By the time you're reading this, we'll have been on quite a few trips and also held our inaugural summer school events in photography and photoshop. At the time of writing we've had some good feedback for the photography course and I hope this continues with the .

Whilst the Summer gives us chance to relax and capture some images for next season, remember if you have some nice images you'd like to share please let me know and also if you have any ideas for some meet-ups to make the best of the opportunites available to us.

Best wishes,

Scott

Secretary

September

4 New Season Commences, Overview of new comp rules, Camera cleaning

DIARY DATES

- Print mounting techniques / Mounting prints to sell
- Digital Evening Resizing images for competitions plus more
- 25 Product Night with London Camera Exchange & Permajet

October

- 2 Merit 1
- 9 A Week in Iceland by Scott
- 16 Mercia Group (Bedworth & Exhall Hosts)
- 23 Print league v Courtaulds Judge Sphinx PS
- 30 Awards Evening plus an illustrated talk by Nick Archer

November

- 6 Digital Evening Designing a Photobook
- 13 Print League v Herberts Judge Courtaulds PS
- 20 Mercia Group (Coventry)
- 27 Motoring in Miniature

December

- 4 Merit 2
- 11 Low Light Shoot (Practical Evening)
- 18 Pre-Christmas Meal at the Oriental Palace
- 25 No Meeting Happy Christmas

September - 2013

7 & 8th The Victory Show at Cosby
A fantastic opportunity to photograph re-enactors from WWII and also an air display. The same programme runs both days and we'll be visiting on both days across the weekend.

TRIPS

October - 2013

19th Bradgate Park Deer Trip
Hopefully we'll get a repeat of the fanastic images we were
able to achieve last year.

November - 2013

TBA Autumn Colours at Batsford Arboretum Timed to co-incide with the colours arriving so we'll plan our visit when nature has done her bit.

We are looking at planning more events into 2014, the weekend trip will consist of a visit to Devon for the rugged coastline at Hartline and some other landscape opportunities.

Look out for more details on our meeting nights or via the weekly email.

If you have an idea for a trip or would like to arrange one for us please speak to Scott as we'd be pleased to hear your ideas.



FRESH FRAME

Helen Jackson-Garside

A Return Trip to Cotswold Lavender

Ever had a day where you feel like you've been to a great location and not really got the most out of the day? Sometimes when I try photographing something for the first time I often: 1) Get too enthused by the subject and total forget the basics of photography and checking my settings 2) Stare at the scene, know there's a photo in there but just can't seem to find it 3) Try a known formula, think I've got some decent images until I get home and realise that my brain was on a different planet. My first visit to Snowshill included elements of all three of these malaises.

Having arrived too early, I jumped out of the car and went for a wander along the lanes. I loved the way the lavender was blowing in the breeze so put into my mind that I wanted to try and capture that on camera. Then there was the shape of the end of the lavender rows against the countryside and the contrasts between the fields of lavender and the barley fields beyond them, being a nature photographer the bees and butterflies caught my eye too. So when the car park opened my head was full of ideas of things I wanted to capture. Right up to the point at which I entered the lavender field... and went ah..... where do I start? This is the first image I snapped:



Canon EOS 1Dmk4, 24mm, 1/4000, f4, ISO 800

Snapped being the operative word, you'll have noticed from the settings that I'd cranked the ISO up to 800, with the idea of freezing the movement of the lavender for the shot, but an aperture of f4 for this view point just doesn't work. I have sharp lavender in the foreground, but the rest is soft in the wrong places.

I then played with differing depths of field on the first bed of lavender I arrived at. I thought I'd try



and get some sharp lavender in the foreground with nicely blurred bands of colour in the background. This was the result... For me it doesn't work because the foreground is too busy, and there's too much detail in the background even though it's blurred.

At this point I turned to my usual trick when scenario 2 has struck – switch to shutter priority, pick a slow shutter speed and play around with panning to capture abstract colours and shapes.

I then went through a phase of meandering with my tripod on my shoulder, stopping staring a bit and trying to figure out how I was going to capture all this lavender and do it some justice. Eventually my brain kicked in and I decided that instead of trying to capture the vast field I'd focus on smaller elements. This proved to be more successful and I liked the simplicity of these images.

Canon EOS 1Dmk4, 200mm, 1/1000, f2.8, ISO 200



However my favourite image of the day was this one above, going back to being experimental. I particularly liked the way a few of the stems in the foreground had moved more slowly than the others giving the ghostly effect. (Above: Canon EOS 1Dmk4, 70mm, 1/5sec, f32, ISO 100)

Once you've paid to visit the farm you can return as many times as you like during the season so with that in mind and the niggling feeling that I really hadn't made the most of the day I decided to return a few days later with the goal of thinking more about what I was doing, paying attention to my camera settings, and trying to come up with some better shots.

Remember that on my first visit I'd noticed the contrasts between the barley and the lavender, but ultimately didn't manage to photograph them? On my second visit I took more time to look around and think about where to start. Instead of having a preconceived shot list I wanted to work through.



I then moved into the field main lavender field and noticed that there must have been a recent hatching of peacock butterflies, it was pretty warm so they were a flighty bunch, but this one managed to stay still for a moment. As I only had limited time I wasn't patient enough to wait for the perfect shot of a butterfly with it's wings open. (Below left: 280mm, 1/320sec, f6.3, ISO 200)

Having crouched down for this shot I found I liked the separation between the foreground lavender and the soft colours in the background. I decided to sit at the end of the row and take the time to have a better look at the blooms around me. As life on the whole is pretty hectic it's good to force myself to step away from it now and again and, as is often the case, when you stop and take in nature, inspiration comes a little easier. I spotted these two intertwined blooms a short distance away.



Canon EOS 1Dmk4, 280mm, 1/500sec, f4, ISO 200

It wasn't until I got home and viewed it on my monitor that I fully appreciated the delicate flowers which were just starting to open I'm really pleased with the subtlety of the tones in this one.

By now the lavender harvest had started, which gave bright contrasts and geometric patterns. Having done a lap of the field and played around a little I found this viewpoint, of intersecting fields. I liked the effect of the sharp band of lavender blending into the more diffuse rows in the background field.

One of my final shots of the day was taken overlooking some of the fields near to the farm, going back to my aspiration to capture the shape of the lavender rows.

I'm so glad that I went back for a second attempt, I was definitely lucky with the weather, but taking the time to think more about the compositions and camera settings I think helped me to capture a far better set of images.

DIGITAL DARKROOM

Scott Wiggins

Kestrel Retouch in Lightroom 4

Firstly import your photographs into Lightroom and select the images you think will be your "keepers" in the Library module. Pressing P will flag any image as a pick, alternatively you can press 1 to 5 on the keyboard to rank the images in star ratings. Use the filter option on the top right of the loupe view to select Flagged or Rating to see your picks. Click one image the hit Develop to adjust it in the Develop module.



Work from top to bottom down the Develop module to adjust the image. I firstly crop the image using the crop tool. This means that I can see the histogram for the chosen composition.



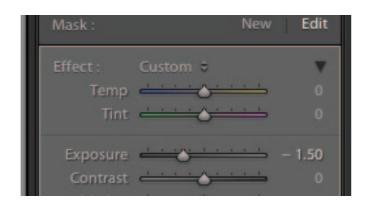
Make global adjustments to the image in the Basic tab. I adjusted the White Balance first to bring it somewhere between Cloudy and Daylight before making some adjustments to the exposure and added a little bit of Clarity and Vibrance.

Be careful with how much Clarity you add as you can lose the subtlety of the feathers and if you go overboard with the Vibrance you can lose the natural colours of the feathers. A light touch is needed.

Press K to activate the adjustment brush and then darken the exposure. Paint over the post to darken this down. You can make the brush small or bigger using the [and] keys respectively.

Leave all the other settings for the adjustment brush within the paler grey box alone.





Click on the Detail tab and adjust the sharpening to taste, make sure you view at 1:1 to see if there is any grain developing. Hold the ALT/Option (Mac) key down and you will see the image go white. Slide the Masking slider across to mask out the sharpening where it is not needed. You will gradually get an outline of the main details as you slide this across. This will help to minimise artefacts occurring in the feathers.



Enable Lens Corrections and make any adjustments you think you might need and then click the Effects tab. We're going to add a slight vignette to draw our eye onto the bird itself. play around with the sliders until you're happy with the result.

Finally go to FILE, EXPORT to output the image as a JPEG.



Works in: Lightroom v3 onward

Difficulty: **
Time to complete: **

A lot of this technique can also be applied in the Camera RAW option from Photoshop CS5 onwards.

You can see a full video of the import, retouch and export of a final JPEG here:

http://youtu.be/poRJRQDCtOs



FAMILY 'PHOTOGRAPHY' HOLIDAY

This was not my first trip to Scotland, but it was my first with my Canon 5DMkII. My plan was Landscapes & Castles, the weather forecast was mixed snow, sun, rain & cold.....very cold. After a five hour drive & a stop off in Dumbarton, I was itching to get my camera out and get a few shots in. The first planned port of call was Dumbarton Castle, after a quick drive from the hotel the gear was unpacked, and a short walk later I discovered a lovely looking castle.....covered in scaffolding. So onwards towards Aviemore, the views across a misty Loch Lomond were stunning so after 8 hours of anticipation we stopped rather randomly on the side of the A82. Grads & a 3 Stop ND filter helped deliver some pleasing results taken across the water from a rocky out crop on the West side of the Loch. After a quick stop for lunch in Fort William, we drove through the drizzle to arrive in Aviemore just in time for tea and an early night.

Sunday morning & not a cloud in the sky, after a trip to inverness, we went for a walk around Loch an Eilein, with views of the castle once lived in by the Earl of Buchan (1343-1405). The castle is now ruined and inaccessible since the water level was raised in the 18th Century.

After some fun up in the Cairngorms sledging we stopped off by the side of Loch Morich and watched a stunning sun set, before retiring back to the hotel.

The following morning was cold and our plan for the day was to take the Cairngorm Funicular railway 2Km up the side of Cairn Gorm, to Ptarmigan station, approximately 1097m above sea level. From the top of the mountain the Loch below looked dead still, I was hoping for some reflections later on in the day. After more sledging and a drive back down to Loch Morich, I discovered the reason for the still appearance of the Loch, it had frozen over night! The sunset that evening was even better than the night before and by getting the camera as low as I possibly could, I managed to use the 10 meters or so of thawed out water to record a fantastic reflection.

Glenfinnan

We departed from Aveimore on Tuesday morning and drove over to Glenfinnan to look at the Glenfinnan monument erected in 1815 to mark the place where Bonnie Prince Charlie raised his standard at the beginning of the Jacobite rising. There were plenty more photo opportunities including the other main attraction at Glenfinnan, the viaduct, erected in 1901, by Sir Robert McAlpine and recently made (more) famous by its appearance in the Harry Potter films.

Our return journey back towards Fort William was along the A830 next to Loch Eil. Frustratingly through the trees and across a railway line I could see a perfectly still Loch with great reflections of

the mountains. There was however no means to cross over to the lake side to get any chance of a shot. We did however eventually find a station & hidden behind it was an old boat yard. Following a chat with the owner I was allowed onto his private jetty and shot my favourite two shots of the entire trip, one up the Loch looking into the Mist, the other down the Loch looking at the Ben Nevis range of mountains.

Oban

The scenic drive down the A828 took in great views of loch Linne. Our next stop was Stalker Castle, from the main road we were drawn in by a tea shop boasting views of Stalker Castle. I can't fault the tea & cakes and to be fair the view was not bad of the castle, it was however too over grown and looking directly into an already low sun. So a drive down to the beach gave some

better shots, but the best shots were from Ardtur looking across Loch Laich. Had we been there in the morning the sun would have lit up the castle and the shots would have been quite spectacular I'm sure.

We arrived in Oban at dusk & look the last parking space opposite the hotel, which looked out over the harbour. An evening strole took us to McCraigs Tower, which is a folly built just over 100 years ago by John Stewart McCraig. The intention was to have a lasting monument to his family whilst providing work for locals. his death brought an end

to the construction and only the outer walls where completed.

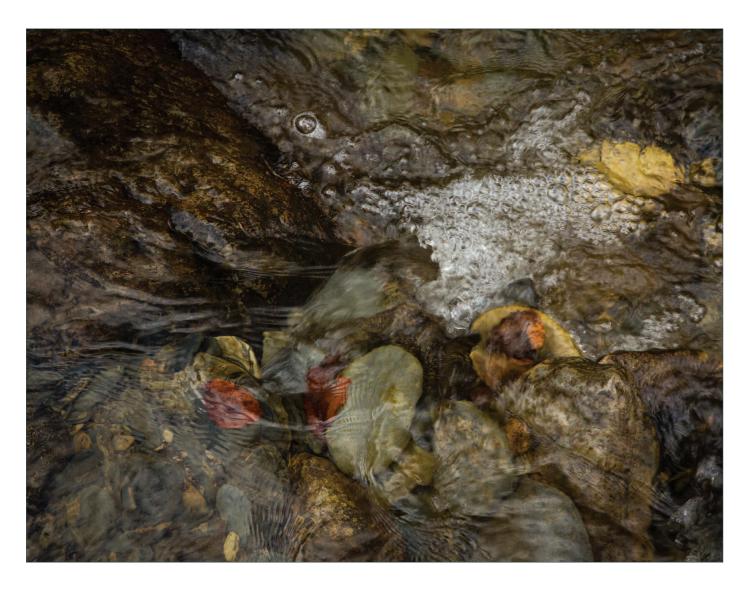
Wednesday was our last full day in Scotland, we planned to visit Dunstaffnage Castle in the morning and inspired by the picture on our new OS map of the area we drove down to Easdale in the afternoon.

Dunstaffnage castle is a partially (mostly) ruined castle and dates back to the 13th century, making it one of Scotland's oldest. It is built on a platform of rock and has walls of up to 3 meters thick. Easdale is off the beaten track about 20 mile south of Oban. as we drove into Easdale. It was apparent by the car parks that they cater for a lot of people, today was quite quiet though. After a walk around the gallery and the village the offer of soup at the pub was drawing us in, we were to be unlucky though, despite the pub sign in the middle of the village advertising, the sign in the window of the pub suggested that the pub had not been open for some time....back to the car to warm up!

The final shots of the day where taken of the sunset, by the rocks on the sea shore, looking out towards Scarba, The journey back to the midlands started with a stop off in Inveraray, although the castle was closed we had a look around the grounds & walked down to the harbour to the last photo opportunity of the holiday, the quay side where there are two Clyde Puffers docked.

Ben Nevis, 5D Mk II, f8, 1/25th

THE GALLERY



Babbling Stream Bed 5D Mk III, AV, f13, 1/60th, ISO 1600 with polariser Taken below Pystl Rhaedr Scott Wiggins



Guillemots 5D Mk II, TV, f6.3, 1/1600th, ISO 100, 100-400 at 400mm Taken on the Farne Islands Matthew Stratford

Matt also caught Tony playing watch the birdie on our weekend trip to Northumbria.



Lavender Powershot S100, ISO 125, 1/640th, f5.6 Taken at Snowshill Lavender Farm Sylvia Barthorpe



Barn Owl 1D Mk IV, AV 200mm, 1/2000th, f5, ISO 400 Taken at J.R.C.S. Falconry Helen Jackson







Bridge Over The Lake Canon 500D, 85mm, ISO 400, AV, f16, 1/32 Taken at Llyn Vyrnwy Don Jennings



Vyrnwy Straining Tower Canon 5D Mk II, 280mm, ISO 1000, AV, f8, 1/250 Taken at Lake Vyrnwy Phil Holroyd

COMPETITIONS 2013/14

Merit Competition

Round 1 Oct 2nd
Round 2 Dec 4th
Round 3 Feb 5th
Round 4 Apr 4th

The Merit Competition is held over four rounds with all members scoring out of 10 all the images shown apart from their own. The highest aggregate score wins.

The competition consists of two categories, prints and digital projected images (DPI).

Members may enter both categories if they wish with a maximum of two entries per category.

Additionally we have a fun creative challenge where members may enter one digital image against the chosen theme. This image must have been taken after the date the theme has been set and not chosen from any archive images to promote image taking and creativity.

There will also be a beginners award. Eligibility is that the member must not have won an overall section of a previous club competition. New members are asked to state their eligibility as this is aimed at encouraging members and is not aimed at more experienced photographers who have won awards previously. The award can only be won once.

JLR Panel Competition - February

Members may submit up to two panels consisting of three images that are on a related theme.

Prints and DPI may be used but each panel must consist only of one medium e.g. all prints or all DPI

Annual Projected Image Competition - March Annual Print Competition - April

Photographers can enter up to 6 images across the following classes:

Pictorial - a scenic image such as a landscape or creative image. Composite images may be entered, but the majority of the image composition must be the photographers own work.

Portrait - Human

Flora and Fauna - A category for your wildlife, animal and flower images. Animals may be captive and normal digital image manipulation may be carried out on the images

Set Subject - A maximum of 2 images can be entered into this section. The 2013/14 subject is "Reflections"

Photographer of the Year - June

Each member can submit up to 5 images in print, slide or digital image format and can be a mixture of formats.

Entries will be judged by an external judge and the highest aggregate score will win.

Rules

Please refer to the club website or Matt Garside, Competition Secretary if you have any queries.

Titles of all competition images must be given to the competition secretary no later than 1 week before the competition takes place. Please email files to jaguarphotosociety@yahoo.co.uk

All images must be the authors own work.

A given image may only be entered once in each type of competition.

Only images taken in the two years prior to the competition date are eligible for entry to the competitions.

Prints

All prints must be mounted. The maximum mounted size for prints is 40cm x 50cm (20" x 16")

PI

Images must be the authors own work, presented in JPEG format and sized at 1024 pixels wide and 768 pixels high at 72 dpi. It is suggested that images falling outside of this aspect ratio are placed on a black background so they are presented in a neat way. The image should be titled as follows:

IMAGE NAME UPPERCASE-author initials lowercase. jpg for example: BLEA TARN-sw.jpg

Any image that is unreadable or contains a virus will be considered a non-entry.

If anyone has problems resizing images then please let us know together with what software you are using. There's a video guide to resizing images in Photoshop on the website. Please remember that you can manipulate projected images in the same way as prints.

TRIPODS - BEING STEADY....

There comes a time when at some point you are probably going to want to get a tripod. If you prefer the run and gun style of street photography then you're probably never going to need one but if you're into wildlife, portraits and landscape work then chances are you'll wind up needing to buy a tripod.

As with any photography purchase, there are a bewildering array of options, costs and choices. Make a budget and ideally stick to it. Aluminium may cost a bit more than carbon fibre but if you're not walking very far then it probably won't be a problem. The main thing you need to know before you buy anything is the maximum weight of lens and body you are going to subject the monopod or tripod to.

Going Solo

The monopod is really useful where you need a bit more support to hold a lens steady or where indeed a tripod is not allowed. Many museums and galleries don't allow the use of tripods without a commercial licence or payment of a fee; Ely Cathedral charge you circa £10 for the privilege. You may well be able to use a monopod for additional support without any additional charge.

Monopods really come into their own with long lenses for sports. There is no problem with panning around a single pole. I regularly use one with my old 300mm prime. There's no way I would have room for a tripod on an ice hockey bench but a monopod is no problem at all enabling me to pan smoothly and effectively without camera shake.

Make sure the monopod packs down to a size you can carry and that it is capable of holding the weight you will put on it.

Next time the football or rugby is on the tv, look along the touchline and see how many monopods are in use. I'd hazard nearly every photographer has one.

Tripods

The tripod needs to be able to take the combined weight of the camera, lens and tripod head. Ideally you want to give yourself a little margin as well for security.

Make sure you try the locks for the legs and any other working parts so that you can use them smoothly, remember this might be whilst wearing gloves as well.

Centre columns provide the option to raise the camera higher than the tripod allows but this does sacrifice a degree of stability at this point. A fixed centre column may also prevent the tripod being used low down for macro work or low viewpoints. It is possible to get tripods that have a pivoting centre column to negate this problem.

The working height should be considered without raising the centre column, if the tripod is high enough for you then the centre column is a bonus. I must admit, I removed the centre column from my tripod and never carry it; I can only think of one occasion I wished I had it.



Heads

Unless you want to screw your camera direct to the top of the tripod you are going to want a head. There are a number of different options.

- Friction

Friction heads usually come with a gripped handle you squeeze to release enabling the ball to rotated. They offer the chance for quicker adjustment than a true ball head but with all the pros and cons of a ball head.

- Ball

Ball heads offer quick adjustment and are available with hydrostatic options to permit panning on the tripod. Their easy adjustment is a great advantage for positioning the camera at any angle however the disadvantage is that precision positioning can be problemtatic.



- Geared

Geared heads provide adjustment across 3 axis. The big advantage is that when the head is setup it is possible to be very precise and once it is setup creep is unlikely to occur. They are great for landscapes where you want the camera level and setup precisely however it isn't possible to quickly change setup.



- Gimbal

Gimbal heads such as those from Benro or Wimberley are commonly used where a long telephoto lens is being used. They enable the camera to spin around its centre of gravity enabling smooth panning and stability when using a heavier lens. You do need a tripod that will take the combined weight.

This type of tripod head isn't cheap but if you need one then it is worth investing as they do provide the stability you need with expensive long telephoto lenses.



Tips

Ensure you keep the bottom legs out fractionally from the end of the rest of the tripod if you are not using them fully extended so you can keep muck out of the tripod mechanism.

Wash the bottom sections of your tripod off in fresh water when you've been around salt water. Your tripod might be carbon fibre if that's what you've bought, but the springs in the clamps won't be stainless steel.

Buy as many tripod head plates as you need. Swapping in the field becomes annoying.

If your telephoto lens has a mounting foot, use this rather than the camera. This removes the weight from the lens mounting ring.

Breakages can occur so do treat your tripod with care, they are strong but not indestructible.

LIGHTING LOGBOOK

Words & Images: Scott Wiggins

2: Key and Kick

Taken on one of our portrait evenings at the club, this image uses a simple Key and Kick Light principle.

The Key light was a shoot through umbrella positioned to wrap some light around onto Diana's cheek to give some loop lighting. This is a simple and effective lighting pattern to flatter most facial types.

The Kicker light was a strip softbox placed to the side of Diana to provide a little light along her hair and arm to separate her from the background.

The lighting in this case from an Elinchrom Quadra had 66% of the power on Diana's face and 33% on her kick light. A little more may have been desirable for clean separation but as this was non adjustable with the design of the battery pack. If you only had one studio light a normal flash positioned vertically could give the same effect if positioned to feather the edge of Dian and not fire into the camera where it would cause flare problems.

The vignette was added to give the illusion of a background light being used by drawing your eye to Diana. All in all quite a simple technique and one that is very effective when you don't have a third light.





HARTLAND 2014

After three years going North for our weekend trip we're going South for a change with a weekend trip to Hartland and North Devon/Exmoor.

The area is famed for its rugged coastline and outstanding natural beauty. Further the area suffers from very little light pollution so it is possible photograph the night sky without the glow from our more urban environs.

We will base ourselves from Hartland Quay and then explore the coast and beaches as well as some of the more notable landscape locations on the way there and back. We will depart on Friday morning to enable us to make the most of the weekend and then return via Exmoor on the Sunday.

Phil Holroyd has already visited the coast so we know there are some stunning images to be made.

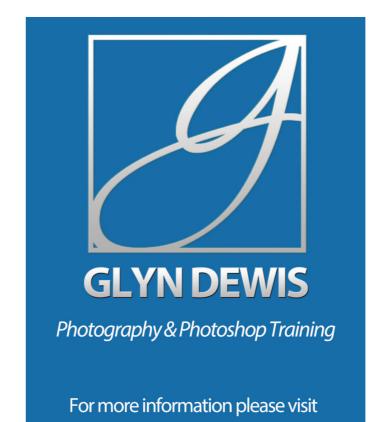
I'll advise costs and full itinerary in due course.

Images: Phil Holroyd





CLASSIFIEDS





WORLDWIDE PHOTOWALK

Scott Kelby's Worldwide Photowalk Saturday 5th October

There's a chance to join in a unique worldwide event and be one of only 50 people in Coventry who could take part.

Scott has been selected to be a walk leader and there are some stunning prizes for anyone who wins their local walk or indeed the best image of the event.

You can sign up at:

http://worldwidephotowalk.com/walk/coventry-england-united-kingdom-city-centre/

Lakeland Photogrpahic Holidays

www.lakelandphotohols.com
John & Gail Gravett
017687 78459
info@lakelandphotohols.com
Lakeland Photographic Holidays is a unique experience for photographers of all ages and capabilities. Whether you are a beginner just learning the basics or a skilled amateur the LPH Experience can help you get more from your camera, allowing you

WWW.GLYNDEWIS.COM

London Camera Exchange

to create truly breathtaking images.

www.lcegroup.co.uk

4c Lunn Poly House, Clarendon Avenue Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 5PP Tel: 01926 886166

New and secondhand equipment, tripods, bags and more.

Manfrotto Spares

www.manfrottospares.com Mail order spare parts for your tripod or head. Gitzo and Manfrotto parts available.

Premier ink & Photographic

www.premier-ink.co.uk Longfield Road , Sydenham Industrial Estate Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1XB



LAST GLANCE



Surfer Taken by Nick Archer on holiday in Costa Rica.

'Capturing an action shot, backlit by the late afternoon sun which was quite low but still hot and bright. There were plenty of surfers but this chap seemed to be the best, based on his ability to stay on his board longer than anyone else!'

Web: www.jaguarps.co.uk Email: jaguarphotosociety@yahoo.co.uk