

Review of 'The Life of a Wildlife Photographer' by David Boag Thursday 12th March 2020

It was so good to hear the audience's frequent laughter throughout David's entertaining and most humorous talk. Such a tonic!

In the 1960s David bought a 35mm single lens reflex film camera and then there was no stopping him. We were so impressed that David could remember the post code of Kodak in Hemel Hempstead. Many of us could remember those heady days of waiting for a box of slides with much anticipation, sometimes being disappointed of course. David however, appeared to be doing very well.

Wonderful photos of kingfishers came up on the screen and these were followed by a series of superb photographs. We were impressed by David's photographs of a badger on his lawn taken with a film camera. This involved a bucket with a hole in it. No harm was done to the animal but David still has the bucket with the hole in it. Don't ask! But more laughter.

Throughout his work David worked on a number of commissions which took him to different continents. He had me fooled at one stage as with suitable sound effects he took us through a swamp with squelchy mud, leeches and dangerous animals all for that definitive shot. However, the excellent photograph that came up on the screen had been taken from a car park. Oh well!

His wife helped out on numerous occasions holding a peanut for a chipmunk (well worth it as it was a lovely shot) and holding an umbrella over his camera, but not over David who got drenched. Although not at the talk we could picture her assisting David and helping him produce such high quality photographs.

The photos that earned him money were not the ones you would have thought of. So a photo of buttercups earned him £4500 from a Swedish company as they wanted it for an advert. David had no idea what for – it was in Swedish of course. Whereas stunning photos of wild animals often earned very little even though they were magnificent.

Over the course of his working life David has produced many photographic books; such a great achievement. So when he was out and about he was often looking for suitable photographs for a double page spread. Not something you would think about unless of course you were working to a commission and had to secure the right photographs.

By the end of the session we definitely had an understanding of his inspirational work and could admire his photographic skills whilst laughing with David. We had come to see the amazing photographs of a wildlife photographer but we were also entertained by a brilliant comedian. Thank you so much David.

Photo and Review by Christine Chittock, Speakers' Organiser.