

U3A Digital Photo Group – 23rd September 2019 Meeting Notes

General

We had a good turnout of just under 20 Members yesterday, considering that quite a number were on holiday (again!!), or else tied-up doing other important things.

During the meeting we:

- Reviewed & discussed the 29th August Photoshoot at Rickmansworth Aquadrome
- Had my presentation on “Photography in the Autumn
- Voted on the “Wildlife” and “Landscapes” Prints Competition
- Voted on the “Your Shot of the Month” Competition
- Had a short discussion on what we aim to do in the future.

29th August PhotoShoot at the Rickmansworth Aquadrome

I gave an outline on what happened on the day in the August Notes to that meeting and so won't go over the detail. Nevertheless, we had some more interesting comments or their experiences, and updates, from various members, some of whom had since returned there to explore and take further shots – definitely a place worthy of more than one visit!

Many thanks again to both Robert and Ian for their efforts before and during the visit – much appreciated by all who came along! 🙌🙌

NB: Ian announced that the costs to those who used the small coach that he very kindly hired and drove, would be £3 each and he later collected the money at the end of this meeting – but if anyone hasn't yet paid him yet then please do so at the next meeting or if you see him before then.

Main Presentation – “Photography in the Autumn”

As mentioned in my email prior to the meeting, I based this presentation on info and links in various emails/blogs from the **ePhotozine** website (<https://www.ephotozine.com/>), and notably the guidance and tips on the site's “Techniques” pages <https://www.ephotozine.com/learn/techniques> - especially those on autumn photography, which high what to look out for and where to find it, and then how to “maximise” the results, & thus, notably,:

- The fantastic natural colours to be seen in this season.
- “Fallen Leaves/Fruit/Nuts & Spiders' webs”
- “Fungi” (it's the season for those)
- “Reflections” from both running and still water, and/or what may be floating on top of it
- “Abstract” photos – techniques to use at the time of shooting and afterwards on your computer, e.g.:
 - o Making use of misty/foggy weather, dragging/panning the camera to produce “strong lines” of colour, using long exposure times to blur branches in the wind or water rushing over rocks;
 - o Creating similar effects in Photoshop (etc.)
- “Photo gear” that should be in your bag when shooting in this season
- “Correct exposures” in weather where the light can be challenging in terms of both the intensity and the shadows, and sometimes the resultant high contrast situations.

The PowerPoint .pptx file is attached to this email so that you can all take a (further) look at it and please do try to follow the embedded hyperlinks – some links didn't work during the presentation but I have (hopefully!) corrected those in the attached version, as well as adding a few more on points that came up in the presentation, or about which Members raised specific questions.

NB: A PDF'd version will be found on our website pages, but I've not been able to make the hyperlinks in that work, and thus if someone needs the .pptx at a later date, then email me and I will forward it them

BTW: If you haven't got PowerPoint (2007 or later is best) then it should be viewable in the equivalent free LibreOffice or OpenOffice packages, and there are other downloadable/on line packages which should do the same.

The September Prints Competition “Wildlife” and “Landscapes”

Given that it was then still Summer at the time of the August Meeting and thus Members were “out and about” a lot, we had the above two categories to cover much of what they were probably shooting – with the two Winners from each category to go forward for the PPT at the next WCH meeting as follows:

“Wildlife”

12 very good and interesting prints entries for this Category, and the 2 Winners were:

- 1) Freda Longhurst “Red Dragonfly”
- 2) Andrew Longhurst “Exmore Ponies”

NB: there were also a lot of shots of herons from both the PhotoShoot and elsewhere!

“Landscapes”

9 very good and interesting prints entries for this Category, and the 2 Winners were:

- 1) Brian Hillier “London City Central”
- 2) Ian Brown “Rickmansworth Canal”

As usual the Winning Members should send the image files for those shots to the email address hillingdonu3a.pictures@gmail.com - giving the:

Competition name – “Wildlife and Landscapes”, the photo position number and the “photo name” (AS ABOVE, PLEASE!!), and, of course, their own name; and image file sizes should be NO LARGER than 1Mb. (please DO NOT send, or copy them to me).

NB: I will also send a message to the above email address so that Eirwen (who initially deals with them) knows what to expect to receive from the Winners – but will point out that Freda’s and Brian’s shots are effectively “equal first” and Andrew’s and Ian’s shots are “equal third”, and so they will hopefully be laid out appropriately in the WCH PPT.

The October Prints Competition = “Autumn”.

Following my presentation earlier, the theme for the October Prints will be “Autumn”.

To remind you: prints are to be from shots taken in the **last 12 months** (*preferably far more recently than that!*) before the meeting in question, be between (roughly) A5 & A4 size, and with the following info on the back (a post-it will do &/or a screen shot of the “EXIF” data from the image file):

- Date
- Camera make/type
- Image size (in “pixels”) & Image file size (in “kB” or “MB”)
- Shutter speed, Aperture size, and possibly the exposure metering mode
- Lens “focal length” & Zoom setting (only “sometimes” for some camera/lens combos)
- ISO sensitivity setting
- Any Exposure adjustments used, including possibly “White Balance” setting.
- Whether flash was used
- If you did “post production work” (“Photoshopping”, etc.) then notes on what you did.

“YOUR Shot of the Month, ANYTHING goes” – August & September Competition

We had a very good entry of 21 shots, and, after the review and voting, the Winners were:

- 1) Freda Longhurst “Dragonfly” (*yet another one!*)
- 2) Malcolm Barwick “Hastings” (*red boat on the beach in front of cabins*)
- 3) Equal 3rd
 - Malcolm Barwick “Canal Art” (*boat full of “raw material” for the metals sculptor on a barge*)
 - Robert Waltz “Ruffled Feathers” (*Goose looking like it’s just been through a hedge!*)

I will forward those 4 images to Tony Kemp for “Your Shot of the Month” web pages for September.

Future Meeting Themes & Presentations

At the start of the meeting, I outlined the reasons and approach that I would be using in the day's presentation, and that I hope that other Members will then take on some of the other subjects covered in ePhotozine emails and on their **Techniques** webpages.

Then, at the end of the presentation, I included a short list of some such subjects, as follows

- Landscapes
- Flowers, Plants & Insects
- Wildlife and Pets
- Coastal and Beach Photography
- Portraits
- Choosing cameras/lenses/accessories" (*inc. buying second-hand*)
- Using old cameras and lenses in the "digital age"
- Smart Phone Photography
- Close-up and Macro Photography

Some of these subjects have already been addressed in presentations over the last couple of years, but many – notably the first 7 – have not.

NB: there may be other possible subjects, and so the Steering Committee will review relevant suggestions made at previous meetings.

Therefore we hope that members will "volunteer" to take one of them, so as to pass on what they themselves already know, but also to "learn-by-doing" things with which they aren't already familiar or had forgotten (*as I did whilst preparing today's presentation*).

Brian then made an "interesting" suggestion: the names of the "willing volunteers" be "put into the hat" and drawn out in lottery fashion to receive their "prizes" from the list of proposed subjects presentations later this year and early next year (*2020 is fast approaching*)! ☺.

We'll see how that works out at the October meeting, **but will the "willing volunteers" please now STEP FORWARD ASAP, because you can learn a lot, and enjoy, contributing your efforts to the Group in this manner!**

As for the October meeting itself, I will give the short presentation on Autofocus methods and tips that I had intended to give at this September one, and we also add some other things if other stuff grabs sufficient interest.

Monthly meeting Diary Dates for 2019 - the 4th Monday of each month
(EXCEPT for some on Thursdays as indicated below)

Mon 28th Oct, Mon 25th Nov, Thrs 19th Dec

PS: We would very much appreciate "Apologies" emails/phone calls if you can't attend any of the meetings!

All the best and see you on **MONDAY 28th October at the Church**

John

And on behalf of the other members of the Steering Committee: Judy Peddie, Len Fenton and Brian Hillier!

NB: you will soon be able to see these Notes on-line at <https://u3asites.org.uk/hillingdon/page/61662>, where you will also find those from previous meetings, and much information & guidance on many aspects of photography, learning how to use your camera, image processing and printing, etc.!