



SNAPSHOT

Newsletter of the Hermanus Photographic Society
March 2018

View from the chair

Three good reasons

"There are three good reasons why you should not order cow's feet soup," the Russian waiter said to the young woman.

"Number one: It has enough calories to last you two weeks.

"Number two: The Russians only have it after drinking vodka all night long.

"Number three: You won't like it."

There is no connection between that Russian restaurant in New York and this photographic society in Hermanus. But there are three good reasons why we should support participation in FynArts 2018 through our third consecutive Print Exhibition.

Number one: It gives each of us the opportunity, and indeed compels us, to use print as an alternative medium to digital projection for our images.

Doing that could help us improve our photography skills, a number of experienced photographers argues in articles published on the internet.

"Having the ability to see the whole image at the same time (in print) will give you a better understanding of how the composition, subtle changes in light and also how the subjects featured are all working together," according to Paul Adshead of Fstoppers.

Number two: Our participation in FynArts is probably the best available showcase of our Club's work to the general public in Hermanus.



Our venue, the Dutch Reformed Church Hall, where we have our regular monthly meetings, may not be ideal in all respects, but its location makes it easily accessible to FynArts visitors.

And the feedback from visitors to our previous exhibitions was very positive.

Number three: Our exhibition has turned out to be a convenient stepping stone to our participation in the annual Western Cape Interclub Competition.

For some years we had no prints to enter in that competition. Over the last two years we selected the best exhibition prints for interclub, and we did very well, especially last year.

Our screens allow us to exhibit about 48 prints, which is ample to accommodate good images from as many of our members as possible. Because we need only 12 prints for interclub, we can choose the very best.

Let's make it our challenge to increase our number of participants in the FynArts Print Exhibition by 50% – from only 16 last year to 24 this year. There is no reason why we should not be able to do that.

Charles Naudé

Images for FynArts Exhibition

Each member may enter up to 4 images for the FynArts Print Exhibition in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall from 8 to 17 June. Images must be submitted in digital format by Tuesday 1 May. More details to follow.

Another bright shooting star

Another Club member was promoted to a higher Star level. Deon Steenkamp had collected enough points (40) and Golds (10) by February to become a three-star photographer. He will need 100 points and 25 Golds to reach the next level.

Salon successes

Robert Johnson had four of his images accepted for exhibition by the Randburg National Digital Salon last month.

The month ahead

The April meeting will be in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall, as usual, on Wednesday the 4th at 19:00. Members may enter up to three images of their choice for evaluation, and one image on the Set Subject, Small Creatures, for discussion. The best set-subject image will be decided by voting.

There was an early morning outing to the Abagold abalone plant on 8 March for some small-creature photography.

Photographing small creatures

By David Peterson, Digital Photo Secrets

By small creatures I mean really small. I'm not talking hamsters and bunnies, but snails and insects. Those critters that can go unnoticed, but are everywhere, and have unique beauty, particularly when photographed close up.



Snail with Reflection by David Peterson

The beauty of starting with small creatures is that you don't need to go on an exotic safari; your subjects are in backyards and parks all over the world. It is amazing what you can discover when you get down and view the world from the perspective of a bug.

Macro photography is the field of photography that opens up a whole world of tiny subjects. Exactly how this is defined, depends on whom you ask, but macro photos are often described as images that are between 1/10 of life size and life size.

Basically, you take close-up photos of small things that end up looking as large or larger than life in your image. This allows you to really show and appreciate the small details that would be lost in a more distant photo.

Choose your subject(s) wisely when beginning to photograph small objects. Don't pick a quick, darting insect for your first shots. Think slugs, snails . . . things that are not known for speed.

You need a steady hand and a stationary subject to take good close-ups. Your images will be all about details, patterns, texture, so look for those things in your subject and make that the focus of your photos.



Crustacean by Anne McKinnell

If you don't have a dedicated macro lens, you can still experiment with telephoto lenses like 24-70mm and 70-200mm.

When shooting macro you actually want a very narrow aperture. Choose aperture priority and stop your lens way down (which means use a high f-stop number like f/32). To compensate for a small aperture, you need a slow shutter speed to let enough light in.

With a macro lens, which allows you to operate at closer than normal distance, you may only be able to get a part of your subject in focus. Compose wisely. You want the subject, or a key part of it, in tack sharp focus with a soft background. Many photographers use manual focus when shooting macro to have better control over what is in focus.

With such a small aperture, getting enough light can be difficult. When you shoot outdoors, take advantage of the available natural light. Your on-camera flash will likely overexpose your subject.

When shooting with a macro lens, it is optimal to be at a distance from your subject. For this reason 50mm and other short macro lenses are not the best. If you are too close you

will get in the way of your own lighting, potentially annoy your subjects, and possibly create an unnatural looking perspective. Look for a macro lens that is at least 100mm or even in the 180-200mm range.



Fly on Daisy by Anne McKinnell

Four tips for bugs and insects

Simon Ringsmuth, Digital Photography School

1. Keep your eyes open

The first step in learning to take photos of insects is learning how to see them in the first place. Our six and eight-legged counterparts are all around us, but they don't usually announce their presence with a trumpet blast.

You often have to look just a little harder to see them, but you can get great shots of bugs and insects on trees, shrubs, rocks, benches, buildings, or almost anywhere if you just keep your eyes peeled.

2. Be patient

While insects are great at giving you unique photographic opportunities, they aren't so good at following directions. Most bugs simply will not listen to perfectly reasonable requests like "Hold still," or "Turn the other way."

To compensate for their lack of cooperation, you often have to simply wait until a good photo opportunity presents itself.



Butterfly on Finger by Kristina Kurtzke

3. Capture the eyes, not just the insect

This tip might seem a bit strange, and it's not always easy to accomplish, but if you can capture the eyes of an insect, it lends an entirely new dimension to your photographs.

When you can get a shot of an insect's eyes it can be almost like the two of you are sharing a moment, watching each other, and you are allowed to be in the other's space for a few brief moments.

4. Alter your perspective

One of the biggest mistakes you can make when photographing insects is to stand above them and point your camera down.

You might get some pictures of spiders, beetles, or giant ants, but they will probably not be nearly as interesting, compelling, or engaging as they could be if you simply tried a different angle, like getting down on your knees and shooting from a low angle.

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All of them are available to assist you with your queries.

Fluit-fluit, my storie is uit.