

December

Camera Clips

Bi monthly publication

From the Editor

James Allan

It is the end of the year, and this is the last edition of Camera clips before the holiday season. Chris has been keen that people contribute to the 31 day challenge. This event is hosted by the club flickr account and consists of a collection of photos taken in December and posted daily. The challenge is to have a new image for each of the 31 days. We have run the challenge for the last 2 years and the images are still on display within the club group account on Flickr. Of course it is not necessary to post every day. Images from several days can be posted simultaneously.

Since the last edition of the newsletter, there have been several competitions including the end of year annual exhibition, a long weekend in Robe, an outing to Onkaparinga Gorge and a quiz night. You can find portfolios of images from each of these events in the following pages.

There are two original articles this month. I have submitted a short piece on a trip I did to the Coorong in 2007 with my friend Rob Tanner, and a guide to naming insects.

The banner this month is extracted from the WEA Landscape award winner, "Wanna", by Jo Tabe. This award is new to our competition and was suggested by Theo and Ursula Prucha. Jo has submitted a fine dunescape to take out this award.

There is an end of year picnic to be held at the Mt Lofty Botanical Gardens on the 9th of December. This is always a relaxed and enjoyable occasion and well worth the effort of attending. People are encouraged to bring a picnic lunch along with their cameras, chairs, rugs, sunnies and the usual picnic fare.

Don't forget to collect and disseminate the club calendar. They are still priced at \$15.00 and available from Ray and Julie Goulter as well as from Carolyn Beckett the club treasurer.

The next club expedition will be held in January (date to be announced) and will consist of a sunset/ dusk shoot at Blanche point and old Port Willunga jetty. The Challenge of this expedition will be to shed new light on a familiar scene.

There is a change to the modus operandi next year. There will be three less competitions and three less workshop to allow us to run peer feedback sessions. These sessions are designed to allow a more relaxed and hopefully more diverse way of giving feedback on images. My understanding is that we are looking for either digital or printed images for these sessions.

Naming Insects.

James Allan

There are around 300 species of mammal in Australia, 800 birds, the same number of butterflies and around 900 reptiles. It is easy to buy a book that will help with their identification. A good book will show adult male, female and juvenile forms. However when it comes to naming insects I encounter a significant problem. There are approximately 250 000 species, of which only 62,000 have been identified or named. It is not possible to compile such a large book. It would be impossible to use such a book, I cringe at the thought. The whole enterprise feels imprecise when you do not have a complete catalogue with which to refer. There is however a large number of people who can identify insects with certainty. How is it done?

When I started macro photography of insects, I was desperate to find some way of naming the subjects of my photos. As Gary Secombe said to me, "it is sometimes better to give a picture a number than have a half dozen people come up after the meeting and point out that what you called a dragonfly was in fact a damselfly."

I started with three books, "Backyard insects" by Paul Horne and David Crawford, "The complete field guide to Butterflies of Australia" by Michael Braby and "Australian Beetles and Bugs" by Steve Parish. With the three books I had a head start. Up to a third of

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Contacting a member from the club; This month Mark & Jenny Pedlar : mnpjpedlar@biqpond.com

Upcoming Events

22. Annual Exhibition and Awards

A display of all entries and presentation of Awards!

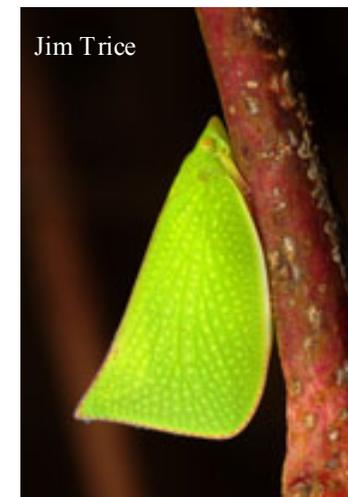
Note: *Bring a plate*

DECEMBER

9. End of year picnic

The last club event of the year – on a Sunday. Always an enjoyable time. Venue—Mt Lofty Botanical Gardens—lower carpark—off of Piccadilly road.

2013—to be announced



Jim Trice

Leafhoppers have a shape like a plant thorn. When you look close you can see they have a large eye at one end.

Chris Schultz



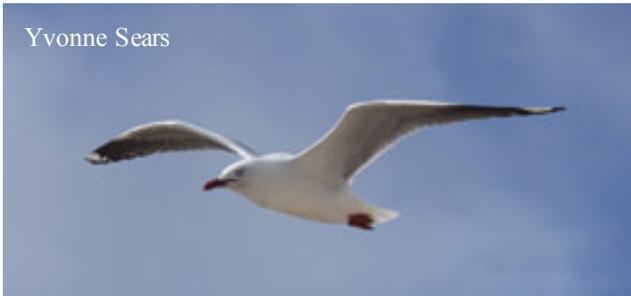
Eric Budworth



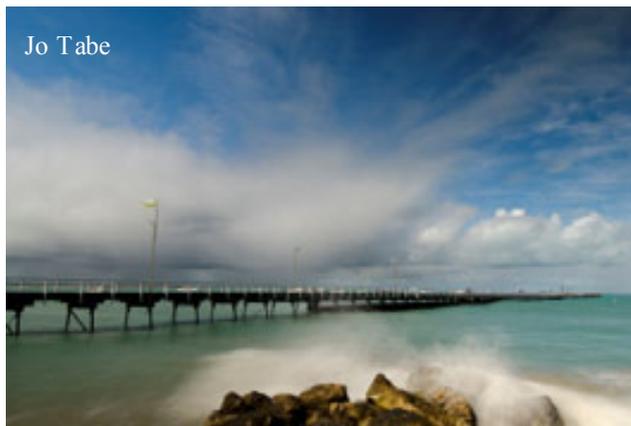
Chris Schultz



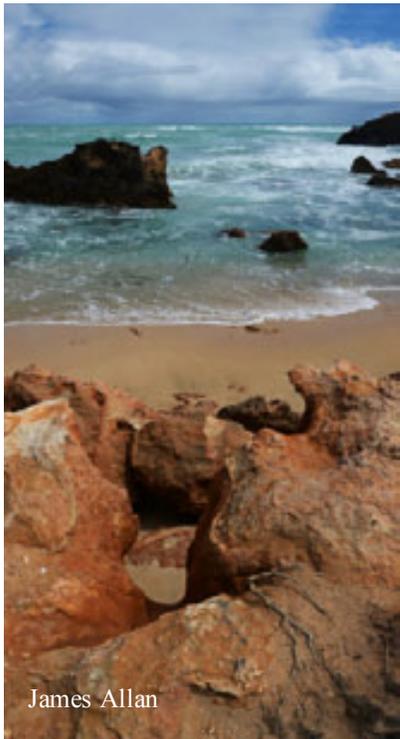
Yvonne Sears



Jo Tabe



James Allan



Helen Whitford / PHOTOGRAPHY



In October the club took a three day holiday to a house in Robe. An excellent account of the weekend by Julie Goulter can be found on the club website. I will note that Julie and Ray also did a fantastic job of organising the weekend. What's more Julie also entertained those who attended with a plethora of logic problems. (I will warn you that it is important to consider the possibility that a murderer and the witness to the murder may indeed be conjoined twins)

Following the weekend the club has been treated to a veritable feast of excellent images from those attending in both the competitions and the Flickr group. Jo Tabe actually took out first place in the annual album print award with a picture of the Beachport Jetty. I would like to display more images in the photo gallery, but have been limited to those that I have access to.

The first day consisted of a walk around Robe followed by a trip to the boat harbour and Obelisk. Eric's image of the Obelisk is beautifully composed, with the edge of the rocky cliff acting as a leading line that curves both out and then back into the frame. On the second day we travelled to Little Dip conservation park and Beachport.

Jo's image captures a wave as it crashes against rocks at the base of the Beachport jetty. She has used her wide lens to good effect. On the third day after packing up, we travelled home after a rendezvous at Kingston for lunch. Chris has captured the mood of the weekend with his lobster picture.

One of the most enjoyable parts of sharing a weekend away with a group of photographers is the sharing of images and swapping notes after the event. This holiday was no exception.

Annual Exhibition

The results for the end of year competition are as follows;

Album prints

The Edge Malpas award for best print went to Joe Tabe for "Beachport Jetty". Second and third place went to James Allan and Adrian Hill. The Annual aggregate was won by Helen Whitford. Second and third place went to James Allan and Heather Connolly.

Colour Prints

The Mal Clopp award for best print went to John Vidgeon for "It wasn't me". Second and third place went to Joe Tabe and James Allan. The Annual aggregate was won by Helen Whitford. Second and third place went to John Vidgeon and James Allan.

Monochrome Prints

The I've been framed award for best monochrome print went to James Allan for "Lone swimmer". Second and third place both went to Joe Tabe and merit to Helen Whitford. The Annual aggregate was won by James Allan. Second and third place went to Heather Connolly and Joe Tabe.

Projected images

The Hutt Street Photos award for best image went to John Vidgeon for "Cat and Mouse". Second and third place both went to John Vidgeon and Joe Tabe. The WEA Landscape trophy was awarded to Joe Tabe for "Wanna". The Annual aggregate was won by John Vidgeon. Second and third place went to James Allan and Helen Whitford.

All other contributors.

It is important that everyone who contributed images in the Annual competition, or in the monthly competitions should also be acknowledged for their work. Overall the standard of club images has been improving. It is a merit to the club that there are such a great number of enthusiastic and talented participants in the competitions.



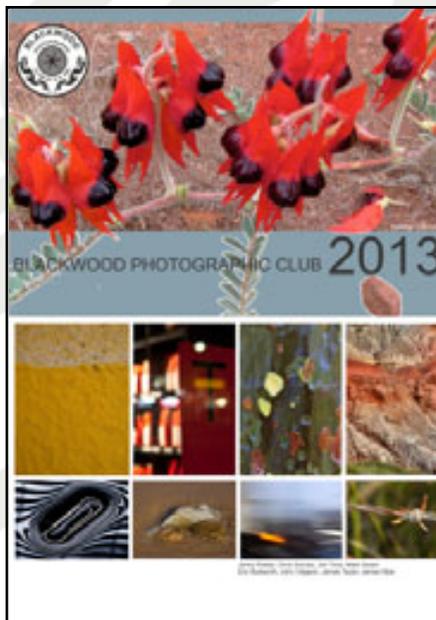
Club Calendar

The Club Calendar is now available.

This year features Sturt Desert Pea on the cover and a collage of abstract images on the back cover. It is an excellent product, showcasing the work of over 20 members from the club and makes an achievement of the club's activity for that period. There have been excellent reviews, and sells for just \$15.00.

We are encouraging club members to support the club by taking 5 calendars on assignment to sell to friends, family or acquaintances. Unsold calendars can be returned.

For those interested in collecting, there are also limited stocks of previous years' calendars available at a discount rate.



The three leading projected images for 2012, John Vidgeon "Cat and Mouse", John Vidgeon, "Baloons on grain" and Joe Tabe, "Wanna"

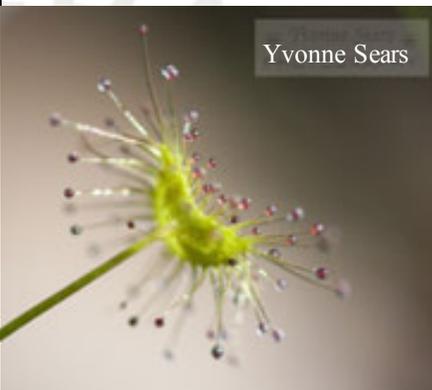
Photogallery—Onkaparinga Gorge



James Allan



Heather Connolly



Yvonne Sears



Helen Whitford



Helen Whitford



James Allan



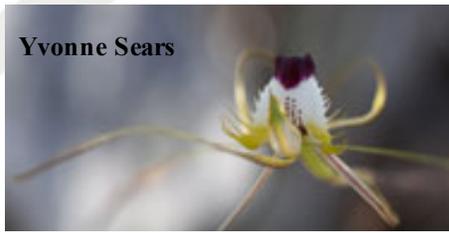
Helen Whitford



Yvonne Sears



Heather Connolly



Yvonne Sears

On 28 October 2012 the club had an expedition to the Onkaparinga Gorge. The Gorge situated less than an hour from the centre of the city is reminiscent of the Flinders Ranges, with narrow gorges, red rock walls and abundant native flora and fauna. Keith Conlon writes *"the Sundews Track is very steep as it finally descends to river level, and the park rangers recommend the southern side as an easier walk in and out. Fat and golden gekkos sunned themselves on a spill of rocks in the rivers, some huge and rounded by millions of year of flooding, others looking like blocks split from walls now crumbled down. A rock hopper's paradise, with long pools reflecting cliffs and red gums, it's again a mini Flinders experience encased in the ranges only minutes away from the southern suburbs."*

At the Sundew carpark we had 10 starters. Graham, Heather and Carolyn walked as far as the Gorge lookout before heading back to the carpark. They enjoyed the rich heathland vegetation and discovered several native orchids (and some not so native), an eastern Grey Kangaroo and Jewel bugs which were feeding on the native hops bush.

The remainder, Helen, Yvonne, Adrian, Shelly, her husband, Myself and Charlotte (my daughter) decided to brave the descent into the Gorge. The trip down proved to be a boon for those equipped with a macro lens. Yvonne and Helen have posted fantastic portfolios of images on Flickr, but my favourites would have to be Yvonne's sundew and Helen's Jewel bug. There was a friendly competition to capture the humble spider orchid. I have decided on Yvonne's image as the winner.

The first to arrive at the bottom, Charlotte and Adrian discovered a small waterfall, which proved to be an excellent lunching spot. We were entertained by the golden skinks (not gekkos) which proved to be accomplished swimmers catching insects and swimming between rocks in the stream.

Progress from that point proved to be difficult. Scrambling over rocks in order to follow the creek, I was accused of having lead the group astray or of having risked life and limb. Fortunately we all returned to the car park, even though we did not end up following the intended route. Perhaps not quite a Bourke and Wills expedition, it still proved to be stimulating and productive of a noteworthy portfolio.

The next club expedition will be held in January, and will probably be to Point Blanche and Port Willunga. Stay Tuned.

the insects were identified in these books. Of those insects that I could not identify, at least I had a clue. I would see what insects they were similar to, and try and put them into some group, class or family of insects. The next thing I discovered was a wealth of web pages and blogs dedicated to naming and describing insects. The most comprehensive (and least useful) of these was the CSIRO. Unfortunately this page is difficult to navigate and requires a high level of prior knowledge before you can find what you want. I prefer something like Oz Animals.com or Lifeunseen.com. Sometimes the taxonomy is confusing. I just want to find the bright blue and red metallic looking bug on the native hops bush and I can't be bothered reading about head shape or segments in the abdomen. The diversity of body shapes and colours within a class can sometimes be overwhelming. I find there are at least 3 categories that contain red and blue metallic looking bugs. If I can't select a family I end up wasting a lot of time searching through all the different branches looking for something familiar. You really need to make a good discussion as to which branch of the tree you should be exploring first. After a while I am left with the feeling, perhaps it's best left to the experts.

The most learned people I know in this area are Jim Trice and Peter Lang. Peter has devoted a lot of his time to just the family of jewel beetles. Peter and Jim however often admit that they often don't know the answer.

My next discovery was that there are nerdy expert people out there who want to help you. When I posted my half-identified insect photos on a Flickr web forum "I think this is a Jewel beetle" I get a reply from the moderator with helpful advice. "This is not a beetle – I think you will find it is a true bug from the family Scutelleridae." A quick look in Wikipedia and I discover it is a Jewel bug. Eureka. Once I have a name it is much easier to search through the possible contenders to finally nail the species. Sometimes it remains unnamed – but happily within its appropriate category.

My kids think I'm crazy. However I do enjoy the virtuous feeling of becoming informed. Along the way I learn a wealth of little details that help me with the next ID. Is there any one else out there with my predilection for naming things? How do you go with the incredibly diverse world of insects? If you have any other helpful tips, let me know.



The Belid beetles look a bit like weevils (but the antennae do not have a 90 degree bend) and are found only in Australia.



The Assassin bug has a large red feeding tube folded under its head with which it will pierce its prey.



Helen Whitford

Although it looks like a beetle this is a true bug—a jewel bug.



This Grasshopper like insect is a junior Katydid



Damselflies are smaller than Dragonflies and fold their wings along the length of their body.

In 2007 I went Kayaking on the Coorong with a friend, Rob Tanner. Rob was keen to count birds for the Australian Bird Census. I admit that I did not have the bird identification skills of Rob, but I was keen to learn. We stowed our tents, a change of clothes and cooking gear into the nose of the kayaks and set off from God freys landing on the Narrung peninsular.

The Coorong is a wide expanse of water, but its waterways are clogged with sandbars shallows and mudflats. Rob used aerial photographs to steer us around the various sandbars and into the various lagoons and tidal creeks that he wished to explore. In the canoe we would paddle up to a large flock of birds. While we remained in the canoe they remained unconcerned. As soon as we stood up they would take alarm and fly off. Rob would record the GPS coordinates, the species and number of birds in a small notebook. I was astounded at the technique for estimating the size of a flock. Rob would count say 20 birds, then he would estimate how many groups of 20 there were in the flock. This reminded me of the movie "Rain man", where Raymond could count the number of spilt matches in a fraction of a second using this same technique.

In the second canoe, I resorted to getting out my Panasonic Lumix and snapping the flock with the camera. Rob's estimates were amazingly close to my photographic record.

What are those birds? I would ask Rob. "Sharp tailed and Curlew sandpipers" he would reply

"How can you tell? They all look like medium sized grey-brown wading birds"

"The Curlew Sandpipers are larger and the bills curve up slightly like a curlew."

"Thanks"

The camera proved valuable also for counting birds in a flock after they had been disturbed and taken flight.

On the second day after camping overnight on the Young Husband Peninsular I took a stroll to do my ablutions. On the return trip I noticed a parrot feeding in the grasses in the sand hills. Rob told me that he had seen it too. We both began to get excited as we discussed the possibility that it might have been the endangered orange bellied parrot.

"You know" commented Rob, "they are hard to tell apart from the elegant parrot. However I feel quietly confident that this one was the real McCoy. The colour of the tail feathers and the extent of the blue facial band usually give it away"

It was at this moment that I shattered the illusion. I pulled out the camera from my pocket and zoomed in on my photograph of the parrot and asked Rob to show me what he meant. With flagging zeal he pointed out the features which confirmed that we had in fact seen an elegant parrot.

That morning the camera changed quite a few identifications. Some grey teal on closer inspection were immature mountain ducks. A small collection of Green-shanks turned out to be Bar tailed Godwits. I think Rob was partly fascinated and partly frustrated at the intrusion of the camera.

To me this desire to name and count things, is a large part of the allure of the natural world. The excitement of seeing and identifying a new bird species is so much more than just finding a pretty parrot. At the conclusion of our trip, Rob sent the photos to a few members of Bird SA to confirm our impressions. Yes came the reply. Definitely Elegant Parrot, Definitely Bar Tailed Godwit.

If you have never experienced the Coorong, I would definitely recommend an overnight trip. The changes in lighting, colour and scenery can be dramatic. Waking to see a flock of thirty pelicans flying low in long ragged V formations is breath taking. Disturbing a flock of black swans and seeing them launch into the air, flailing red feet and beating white wing tips is a sight to behold. It is a pleasure to walk in the sandhills and check out the plant life, lizards, Emus and kangaroos. I am puzzled that we live so close to this wonderful location, and yet elect to travel overseas to have a wildlife experience.

I discovered on this trip that it is not always possible to take that highly esteemed beautifully lit bird portrait. Sometimes it is too hard. In fact there is a great pleasure in doing bird identifications from quickly snapped shots of birds on the move. It was certainly an aid to counting and naming things. After all there is a greater sense of authenticity when the birds are situated in their own environment doing their own thing. And as it turns out some of the photos were actually quite pleasing and I might even venture to say some were good.



Rob at Freshwater Spring Inlet



Mixed flock of sharp tailed and Curlew Sandpipers



Is it the Orange Bellied or Elegant Parrot?



The tail of the middle bird demonstrates strong barring, confirming the ID as Bar Tailed Godwit.



The change in lighting from hour to hour can be dramatic.



Algal bloom adds colour to the scene.



In October this year we held our first ever quiz night. Julie Goulter must be congratulated for approaching local businesses and procuring prizes for the evening. Despite a tentative start we ended up with a reasonable crowd. Well enough to field five teams. Ashley Hoff and myself were quiz masters. The questions were all constructed around images taken by club members. Questions were in categories—Science and Nature, Art and literature, Sports and leisure, Entertainment, History and Geography. These are the same categories as the original trivial pursuit game.

Despite 6 rounds of questions we also had 4 special challenges between the rounds. A “left right discrimination challenge” sought to demonstrate our latent dyslexia. The task of telling a left hand from a right hand is not always easy when the images are coming in quick succession. The “shutter speed challenge” asked contestants to guess the shutter speed from a range of photographs. In the adjacent window you can see images from the “Macro Challenge”. It’s amazing how common everyday objects are unrecognizable when they are seen up close.

Talking of dyslexia, my atrocious spelling was quickly noticed by the audience and won a few tables one or two points. Jokes were also point winners. Well it was up to the audience to vote on the merits of any jokes, puns or witticisms to see if they made the grade.

We were very fortunate to have a wide selection of images by Ashley Hoff on the night. Perhaps the highlight for me was his star trail photo from the shutter speed challenge. Taken with a 120 minute exposure, the trails were long and mysterious. One person thought it was the cover of their physics book from school.

Ray Goulter summed up the night with the following quote, “It was the worst organised quiz night I have ever attended and I enjoyed every minute of it.”

Carolyn tells me the night raised around \$150.00. There was talk of doing it again next year. I’d be keen to hear your feedback. James