

OSPSP newsletter

The newsletter of the Ordnance Survey Photographic Society
In its 67th year.
summer 2020



Galapagos
Roy Fisher's natural history
Reflections in difficult times

Thoughts from the chair

This summer edition has run a little late but we're still in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. At the moment there's no indication as to when life might get back to what we would consider as normal. While we can't hold the usual club activities, there is one that's continuing; the SCPF league. It's in PDI format only this time, but it will be running and in this edition I've included our panel. It looks like the Newbury Challenge will also be taking place, again as PDIs, so if you can, keep looking for new images but, as always, stay safe.

Mike Stacey

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Roy's nature photography

I have always loved walking in the countryside and learning about animals, birds, flowers, insects etc. I have also loved looking at nature pictures. Every year I marvel at the nature images in Southampton International Exhibition and secretly wished I could take pictures like that. But taking nature pictures is something I hardly ever did. Why is that?

In truth I lacked the patience and didn't have the 'proper' photographic equipment. Things changed when I bought a new camera – a Panasonic Lumix TZ70 compact camera. It is sometimes referred to as one of the best cameras for travel photography, but in my opinion it is very good for nature photography as well. For a start it has got a Leica lens, a telephoto with a long range and is very small, lightweight and versatile. It is the best camera I have ever owned and I use it nearly every day.

Well that's the camera sorted, now what about the nature bit? Take insects for a start. Many insect make great subjects i.e. butterflies, damselflies, moths and beetles.

Some beetles are beautifully coloured and are easier to photograph as they are a bit more static. One of the problems of photographing insects is the level of the wind. It makes the food plant and flowers of insects sway like mad. Insects like sunshine and still days. Photographers like sunshine and good light as well.

For the non-serious nature photographer birds are more tricky because they don't



Beautiful Demoiselle Damselfly



Blue Damselflies



Red Admiral

stand still for very long. Sitting in a bird hide for hours is not my cup of tea due to lack of patience. Flowers are a lot easier providing it's not too windy and if it is sunny you have got to watch for over exposure of those white flowers. I love photographing animals, especially deer because they are quite large. You can get reasonably close if you are very quiet.

Of all the nature subjects I think fungi are the easiest. They are wonderful as they stay still even if it is windy! The New Forest has a fantastic array of fungi and you can spend hours wandering in the woods seeing how many different types you can photograph.

One day I would love to get one of my nature images into the Southampton International Exhibition. Now I am just content to enjoy my nature photography. I have attached a little gallery of my recent best nature images to this article. Recently I made a book on the New Forest which contains some of my nature pictures.

Please see www.bobbooks.co.uk. I have also a nature section on my website. Please see www.royfisherphotography.co.uk

Nature Photography makes a lovely change from Chalk Abstracts. I bet you cannot wait to see Colourful Beetle No 60!

Roy Fisher



Comma



Red Damselfly



Thick Legged Flower Beetle (Male)

'The camera is an instrument that teaches people how to see without a camera.' Dorothea Lange

Our 2020-21 SCPF league entry

We would, under normal circumstances, be at the beginning of the 2020-21 season. Circumstances are clearly not normal but some club activities will continue as previously. This includes participation in the SCPF league but there will only be a PDI league this time and judging will be via Zoom. A panel for OSPS has been selected by Barbara Beauchamp, Andrew Mills and Mike Stacey, and these are our eight.



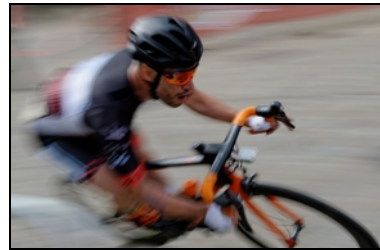
'Coffee - New York'
Andrew Mills



'Have a headache'
Maureen Toft



'Down'
Barbara Beauchamp



'The cyclist'
Mike Stacey



'Guggenheim 1'
Brian Jones



'Rough Tor 2'
Roy Fisher



'Mist at Hampi'
Dave Perkes



'Grass shadow'
Roger Beauchamp

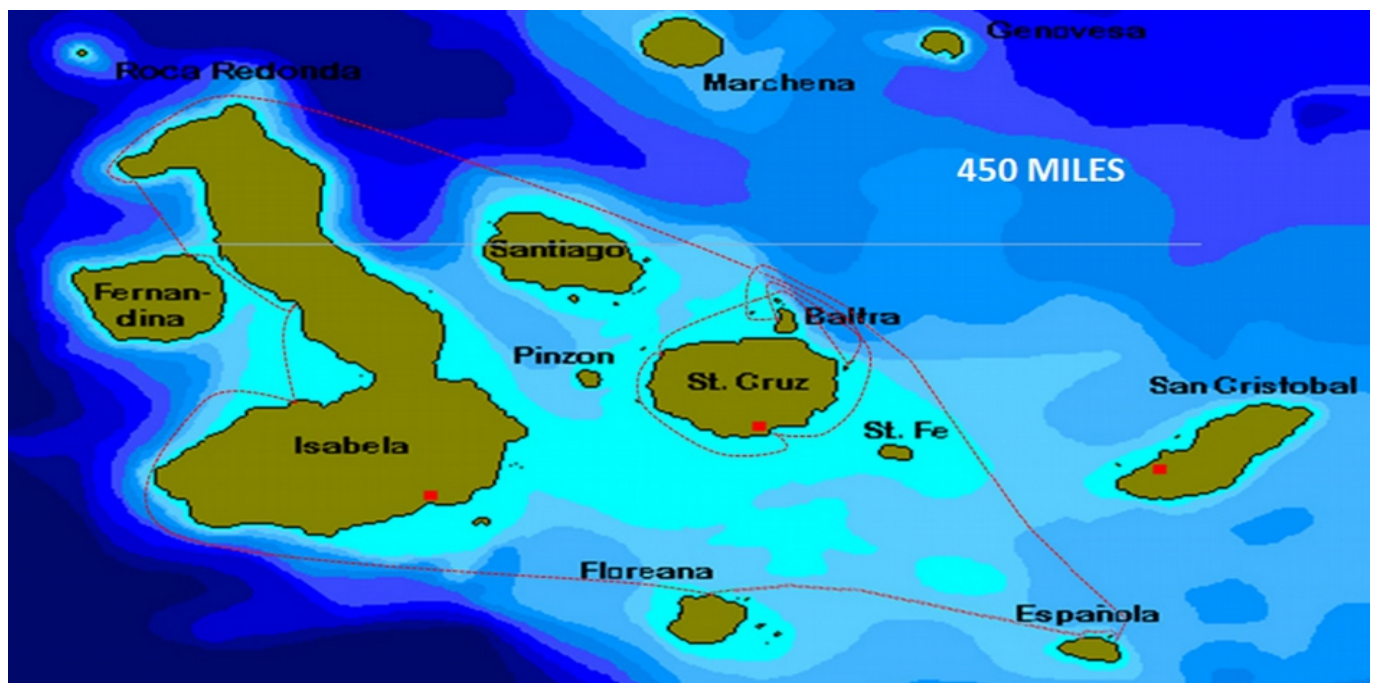
'Photography is the story I fail to put into words.' Destin Sparks

A visit to the Galapagos Islands

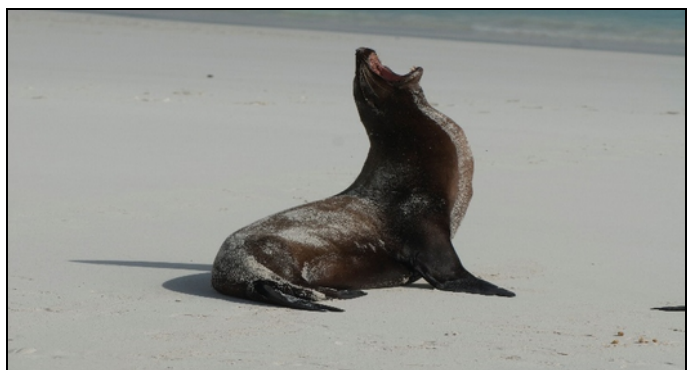
Almost on the other side of the globe our journey took us first to Schiphol in Amsterdam, across the Atlantic to Quito, Ecuador at almost 9000ft above sea level and after two days acclimatisation the final 3 hour flight to Baltra. Our ship Celebrity Flora, a modern purpose-built vessel made an ideal floating hotel from which to explore the islands made famous by Charles Darwin when he published his paper 'Origin of Species' in the 1800s.



The route looks a little torturous on a map but was well planned to understand how different variations of the same species had developed. Our first night at sea took us to Espanola.



There were many sea lions on the beach but our first sight of a marine iguana was a taste of what everyone had been expecting and cameras clicked everywhere at this single little creature. Little did we know that before the end of the week we would have to take care to avoid treading on carpets of them!



Wildlife seen at Suarez Point, Espanola



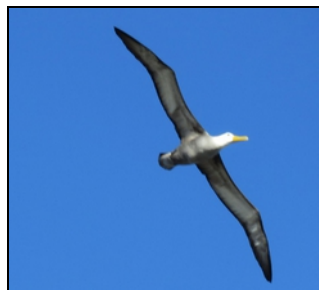
Sally Lightfoot Crab



High Tide



Marine Iguana (& Crabs)



Waved Albatross



Turtle



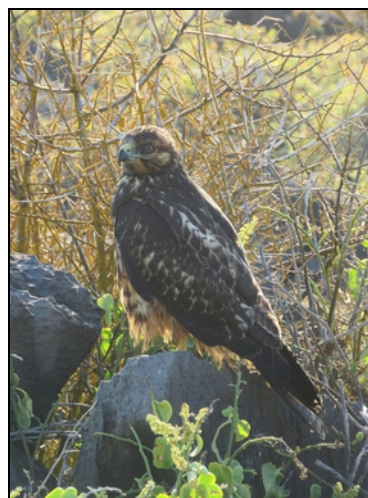
Blue Footed Booby



Water Spout



Grey Heron & Chick



Galapagos Hawk



Waved Albatross Greeting



Nazca Booby



Waved Albatross Greeting

Seen at Moreno Point and Urbina Bay, Isabella



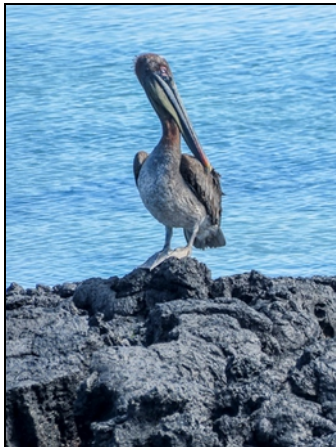
Land Iguana



Stranded Coral



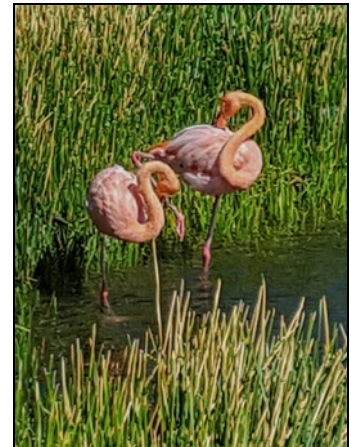
Marine Iguana



Pelican on Lava



Galapagos Mocking Bird



Flamingos



Iguanas across the path



Boobys diving, Pelicans, Iguanas, Frigate Bird,
Sally Lightfoot Crabs



Dolphin Feeding Frenzy

Seen at South Plaza, Santa Cruz



Longtailed Tropic Bird



Land Iguana



Swallowtailed Lava Gull

Seen at Puerto Ayora, Santa Cruz



Male Frigate Bird



No visit to the Galapagos would be complete without a visit to the Research Centre, where work is carried on preserve some of the giant tortoise species of the islands. There are at least 14 different shell shapes, each from different islands, the existence of which support Darwin's evolution Theory. The centre not only categorises the various types but has a breeding programme to retain and strengthen those types which remain.



Non-Paying Customers at the Fish Market

Martin Buckley

Reflections in difficult times

Over the years we all navigate through life in our own ways and develop coping strategies to deal with the difficult times as best we can. If I need to think about something I quite often go for a walk to see if I can, metaphorically speaking, approach an issue from a different angle – let my mind wander. These walks can be local, or could involve a train journey to places like London, Oxford or Bath. As always I'll carry a camera of some sort, but the images I come back with may depend on my state of mind.

On one occasion, many years ago, I found myself on platform 1 of Southampton Central waiting towards the back of the platform for the train to Waterloo. This particular morning I wasn't exactly in a positive state of mind. Something was troubling me which was why I was going for a walk, but before the train had even arrived something odd happened. Towards the front of the platform was a black baby buggy side-on to me, with who I took to be the parents engaged in conversation next to it. While I was looking at the buggy, and without any warning, a small face appeared from behind the hood, looked straight at me and smiled. Seconds later the small face disappeared. As I was puzzling over this surprising interaction, the train arrived and a flurry of passengers obscured the buggy, which I never saw again. I spent the rest of the day (and many occasions since) wondering what had happened, and I'm pretty sure it influenced the images I shot that day.



On another occasion I made my destination Bath, and found myself spending a morning looping through an area I was unfamiliar with. By chance I discovered the disused graveyard of St Mary's Church on the corner of Henrietta Road and Bathwick Street, and while wandering through this small but fascinating place found this intriguing gravestone. What caught my attention was the remaining fragment of the inscription against the heavily weathered stone. It's just enough to give a hint of who it memorialises, but it's so very nearly gone.



Fast forward to 2020 and I find myself in a strangely similar scenario. When the pandemic lockdown restrictions eased, my wariness about walking through the city centre didn't, so I found myself limiting my walks to the local area. Initially it was just putting in a few kilometres on streets to get my 10,000 steps, but then I realised that I was ignoring the common and something else; the old cemetery. In all the years I've lived in the area just below the



common I had never visited the old cemetery. I had somehow managed to remain blissfully unaware of it. Discovering this place during a global pandemic seemed decidedly odd, but perhaps it was an age thing too. I've reached a point in life where I'm starting to understand the inevitability that one day I will no longer exist. Taking walks through an old (but quite wonderful) graveyard and perusing the memorials is one thing, but doing it during a pandemic adds another layer to it. A couple

of years ago a TV series called 'Person of Interest' came to an end. During the last episode, an artificial intelligence called Northern Lights is asked to sum up what it has learnt about humans.

'Sure, everyone dies alone. But if you mean something to someone, if you help someone, or love someone, if even a single person remembers you, then maybe you never really die at all.'

Reading the memorial inscriptions, there's an awful lot of remembering going on in Southampton Old Cemetery. I don't know any of those who are there, I have no family there that I know of, but it's surprising how a few words can tell a story that makes you stop and think.

Mike Stacey

Story behind the picture

I was intending to attend the Winchester Cycling Criterium this summer, but as with some much else in life it was cancelled by the coronavirus pandemic. I started shooting this event in 2015, having discovered it by accident the previous summer. I hadn't photographed a cycling event before as it had never appealed to me, but this closed-circuit street racing had potential. You could get close. Much closer than motor racing. That meant tighter crops, shallow depth of field and interesting compositions. And the colours! These cyclists wore bright, dynamic clothing that added to the visual impact – and in this case there was even matching nail polish!

The races are divided into categories, with this image being captured during one of the women's races. The bends tend to give the best images as the riders would lean into them at seemingly crazy angles. Dramatic, but I couldn't help wondering why the wheels didn't slide away from under them! Actually, sometimes they did, as I would find out.



During the day-long event I move around the circuit to get different views, and a short while after I shot this image I moved to the south end of Little Minster Street. I was thinking of head-on images but wasn't happy with the background, so moved halfway up the street.

As I waited for the cyclists to come round again, some 50 metres away at the exit from Kings Head Yard where the bikes would make a sweeping right turn into Little Minster, I heard a scream and saw what appeared to be a bike bouncing off a wall without its rider. I didn't run towards it, camera in hand, as I had seen too many motor racing accidents where the driver was trapped in the car and in distress. Yes, I know, I would make a lousy paparazzo, but the appearance of an ambulance confirmed the seriousness of the situation.

There were numerous 'smaller incidents' where riders came off but got up very quickly, albeit with

various cuts and scrapes. There were 3 of these that happened in front of me, but they were so fast that I couldn't have captured them unless I was pointing straight at them at the time. In each case the riders were either up and on their bike or up and off the circuit, but 2 were visibly and literally shocked by the impacts.

Street Racer 7 was shot with a comparatively elderly Nikon D700 and a positively ancient 70-210mm F4 AF Nikkor (an early screwdriver model) at F4 on continuous AF. The trick seems to be to get the right AF-C priority selection. You might think that would be 'focus', but 'release + focus' seems to give a much higher success rate.

Mike Stacey