



Newsletter

Issue 03 - July/August 2011

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Out and About with Michael

Welcome to issue three of my photography newsletter. Since my last newsletter, so much has happened! First up, at the end of May, Mark and I headed out to the 'Territory' for our 6 day "Red Centre Experience" Trekabout Photography workshop. It went exceptionally well in every way and all of our participants, as well as Mark and I, had a great trip. Fantastic weather every day, amazing icons and subjects to photograph and great camaraderie all around. I also had some time to do some of my own photography in downtime, including a helicopter ride with Mark over Ormiston Gorge and surrounding areas. Doors were off, we were hanging out of either side of the chopper and our fingers were on continuous shutter. What a buzz!



While I was in the Red Centre, I received a lovely surprise. A friend of mine sent an email to congratulate me on my latest cover shot (June 2011) for *Australian Photography Magazine*. I had no idea that my image was on the cover, or which image was used, so went to the Alice Springs Newsagency to buy a copy. I immediately saw that it was the shot I took of the sunrise over Mt Geryon in Tasmania, while walking the Overland Track earlier this year. This is my sixth cover image for *Australian Photography Magazine*. To see a high resolution version of the cover, click [here](#)



I recently spent some time at Mt Barney Lodge as a guest of Innes and Tracey Larkin, owners of the Lodge. While at Mt Barney, I gave Innes some one-on-one photography tuition, showing him how to best use his new Nikon DSLR, as well as taking some photos myself. This included three 4.30am starts in order to get some shots of the early morning sun over Mt Barney. It was a bit of a task climbing the side of a mountain each morning in the dark using headlamps, with our backpacks loaded with photography gear & tripods. To add to our trials, it was 0 degrees on one of the mornings! Thank goodness Innes made some piping hot coffee each morning (using his portable Jetboil stove) and it was a real delight to be drinking this hot coffee, while standing on top of the mountain, waiting for that morning 'glow' over Mt Barney. Two of the mornings were 'ordinary' for photography but on the third morning, we were rewarded with gorgeous light. Yet another case of being rewarded for persistence.

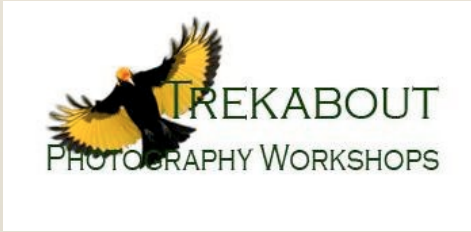
I have only just returned from a few days at Girraween National Park, where I was doing some more research for Trekabout's up-and-coming 3 day "Girraween Experience" in September. I also had the opportunity to photograph the Sphinx at sunset, with the gorgeous golden/reddish sunlight setting on the huge granite boulders. It was a wonderful experience and walking back along the track at night, led by the light of the near-full moon, was just one of my many special moments in nature. I decided to camp for a few nights but little did I realise that a record cold snap would descend on the area, with a chilling minus 10 degrees one morning and minus 6-8 degrees on the second. My frozen jerry-can, water bottles and nearby taps was proof that this wasn't a mistake in the thermometer reading and weather report! I can't wait to return there in spring, when the wildflowers will in full bloom.

Keep enjoying your photography and I hope to see you soon at a photography workshop or one-on-one tuition session!

Cheers

Michael

Trekabout Photography Workshops



Our half day and full day workshops over the last few months have been well-received and attended. Apart from recently adding new dates for our popular repeat workshops, Mark and I are pleased to announce that **we have two new workshops being planned**. One is a complete 'revamp' of our full day wildlife workshop and the other is a totally new, two and a half hour Brisbane sunset and city lights workshop, that will be held on a weekday afternoon. We have listened to you, our customers, and will be announcing itineraries, prices and dates for these new workshops very soon. Watch this space...

Three Day "Girraween Experience"

Friday 16th September 2011 - Sunday 18th September 2011

Set in the stunning "Granite Belt" and a 45 minute drive from Stanthorpe, Queensland, Girraween National Park is a photographer's paradise. There are lots of opportunities to photograph landscapes as well as one of the best profusions of wildflowers (including orchids) anywhere in south-east Queensland. Mark and I will spend 3 days showing you how to best use your digital camera to take stunning shots, as well as show you all the best photographic locations within Girraween National Park.

Bookings for our inaugural Three Day "Girraween Experience" are going very well, so if you would like to book for this workshop, I would suggest doing so soon, before places are filled.

For more information, click [here](#).



Lord Howe Photograph by Darren Jew

Seven Day "Lord Howe Island Experience" with guest tutor, Darren Jew

Sunday 9th of October - Saturday 15th of October 2011

Darren Jew, one of Australia's most experienced and qualified nature photographers and tutors, spoke with me recently about his previous experiences presenting photography workshops on beautiful Lord Howe Island. He can't wait to go back there again in October as a guest presenter of Trekabout Photography Workshops, where he and I will spend a week showing participants not only the best locations to photograph this magnificent island but

also how to take the best possible photos. This is one experience not to be missed!

For more details, click [here](#).

Upcoming Trekabout Workshops:

[Full Day Mountain Experience - O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat](#)

[Half Day Historical Experience - Newstead House](#)

[Half Day Macro Experience - Mount Coot-tha Botanic Gardens](#)

[Half Day Reptile and Frog Experience - Closeburn, near Samford](#)

[Weekend Mountain Experience - O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat](#)

Saturday, 23rd July 2011

Saturday, 6th August 2011

Sunday, 28th August 2011 (AM)

Sunday, 28th August 2011 (PM)

Friday 2nd - Sunday 4th September 2011

One-on-One Tuition



A huge thanks to all of my one-on-one participants who have attended sessions over the last few months. It has been very rewarding to see so many happy faces at the end of these sessions. This is especially so where I have been able to explain menu and digital camera settings that have often confused people and done so in simple, everyday language that is easy to understand. Anyone who has been to my one-on-one tuition sessions will vouch that I am extremely patient and will work toward each participants own skill levels. If you

would like to book a half day or full day one-on-one tuition session with me, click [here](#).



Eight Day "Bowra Birding and Bird Photography Experience" Saturday 13th of August - Saturday 20th of August 2011

The eight day Bowra birding and bird photography workshop I'm presenting with professional birding guide Barry Davies, starting at the end of July 2011, has **booked out in record time**. Our new dates are Saturday 13th of August until Saturday 20th of August 2011. If you would like to spend a week 'out west' being shown where to both find different bird species, as well as learn how to

best photograph them, then this workshop is for you. For more information and/or to make a booking, click [here](#)

Barry Davies and I are also the two guest leaders at the Mt Barney Lodge's 3rd Annual Bird Week, from the 7th to the 11th of September 2011. If you would like to stay at Mt Barney Lodge (meals included) and spend 4 days looking for local birds, as well as being shown how to best photograph them, then click [here](#) for more details.



Photography Tip of the Month

To get as much of your subject in focus (i.e. greater depth-of-field) when photographing macro subjects, especially when you are quite close to your subject with a macro lens, you will need to use a smaller aperture opening/ f-stop. To achieve correct exposure with a small aperture, your shutter speed will normally be quite low. A slow shutter speed results in movement, which can lead to blurry photos. One way to avoid this problem is to use flash to light up your subject. If you are using a compact camera, its pop-up or inbuilt flash should be adequate for this purpose. On an SLR camera a macro or ring flash is ideal. It allows you to move your camera with your subject, especially if it is a butterfly, dragonfly, bee or similar moving subject. The operating system of a macro flash unit fits onto the hot shoe of your camera, while the flash component generally fastens onto the front of the lens. You can also use an external flash on your SLR, but I would advise using a diffuser over the flash, as this creates a more even, natural lighting effect.

If the macro subject you are photographing is stationary and you would like to create a more 'natural' look for your macro subjects (i.e. no flash), a tripod is highly recommended. This will minimise any camera movement caused by hand-holding, especially when using a slower shutter speed that results from using a small aperture. I also like to use a remote or cable-release, to guarantee the least amount of movement to the camera while the photo is being taken. If you don't own either of these, you can improvise by using your camera's self-timer.



Photo of the Month

A Row of Stately Fig Trees on Norfolk Island. Photo: Karen Palmer



From this issue of my photography newsletter onwards, I have decided to make my 'Photo of the Month' one taken by various participants of my workshops and one-on-one tuition sessions. For this inaugural participant photo, I have chosen one of Trekabout's most staunch supporters, Karen Palmer. I have watched Karen's photography go from strength to strength over the years and she is so incredibly keen and dedicated to her craft. Karen has attended lots of workshops and her progression has been amazing. Well done Karen!

Here is what Karen had to say about the photo she chose for the 'Photo of the Month':

Last year I was incredibly fortunate to attend a Trekabout Workshop on Norfolk Island, which is a nature photographer's paradise. Our small group spent a wonderful week shooting from dawn until dusk, with beautiful weather and a wide range of subjects including Red Tailed Tropic birds, convict ruins at Kingston and spectacular coastal scenery.

One of my favourite spots on the island was New Farm Road with its row of stately Fig trees. What I wanted to capture with this image was the majesty of these giant figs, and to emphasize the way the road draws the eye into the distance.

One of the challenges here was finding the right time of day to take the picture. Too early and the light was quite flat, but too sunny and there were lots of distracting blown out highlights in the scraps of sky visible through the foliage. After visiting the spot several times I found the warm light of late afternoon suited best and then I took care not to allow too much sky to peep through.

*I used a full frame camera, the Nikon D700, with a 24-70mm lens secured on a tripod. **My settings were Aperture priority, ISO 200, f20 and an exposure time of 1/3s.***

I would have liked to have a wider angle on this, to pick up more of the interesting fence on the right hand side, but using a wider angle allowed too much bright sky in through the canopy and taking a step backwards wasn't an option either.

In hindsight, I wish I had taken several vertical shots to stitch together for a panorama, and I hope I'll get another chance to do that some time in the future...

Inspirational Photographers

Peter Dombrovskis (1945 - 1996)

One photographer who has inspired me greatly over the years is the late **Peter Dombrovskis**. He is, in my opinion, the greatest landscape/nature photographer Australia has ever seen. Predominantly a photographer of Tasmania's wilderness, Peter's photos are not only stunningly-beautiful but some of them were very much a part of the reason that the Gordon/Franklin Dam project never succeeded. Peter's beautiful images of the Franklin area and surrounds were shown around Australia and across the world and there was a massive outcry against the damming of this area, once people saw how incredible this wilderness area was.

Peter's wife, Liz Dombrovskis, who I had the pleasure of talking to recently, stopped publishing Peter's work in July 2009, through their company West Wind Press Pty Ltd. You can, however, purchase archival-quality prints of some of his most iconic images at the Wilderness Gallery in Cradle Mountain, Tasmania. To view and purchase some of Peter's images via the Wilderness Gallery, click [here](#)



Image of Little Horn reproduced with the kind permission of Liz Dombrovskis

Industry News (Competitions, Exhibitions and more)

The 2011 Canon AIPP Australian Professional Photography Awards (APPA)

The 2011 Canon AIPP Australian Professional Photography Awards (APPA) were held from the 24th – 26th of June at Darling Harbour in Sydney. As an Accredited Member of AIPP, I would have loved to attend the judging of these awards, but was unable to due to previously-booked commitments. I was absolutely thrilled, however, to hear that for the first time there would be live streaming of the judging available. For a very low fee, I have been able to sit through many hours of judging, including the Science, Environment and Nature, Landscape and Travel sections, in the comfort of my own home. It was great to see the actual images being judged, hear the judge's thoughts, see their scores as well as listen to challenges where there was a distinct difference in judge's scores. A huge congrats to all who achieved great results in the competition. To see the winners of categories, click [here](#)