



## Newsletter

Issue 10 - February 2013

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## Out and About with Michael

Welcome to issue number 10 of my photography newsletter. I hope you find it informative and enjoyable to read.



Mt. Field in Tasmania - covered in snow

My last workshop/tour for 2012 was the very successful seven day 'Tasmanian Experience' in late November, that I presented with Tasmanian landscape photographer, Luke O'Brien (full report below). This was followed by a week photographing around Tasmania, split between the Cradle Mountain region and Mt Field National Park. I also spent some much-needed chill-out time with my wife Dena. As one of my favourite photographic destinations in Australia, it was great to spend a few weeks there, before the heat wave hit. It is hard to believe that only a few weeks before the scorching weather, we were walking in 60cms of snow, only an hour's drive from Hobart!

The end of the year also saw two of my articles published. The first was published in *Wildlife Australia Magazine* and titled 'In The Picture', based on how to observe, approach and finally photograph wildlife. The article can be viewed [here](#).



The second article was my regular feature in the 'Masterclass' bird photography series for *Australian Birdlife Magazine*, the subject this issue being the Little Egret. The article can be viewed [here](#).



2013 has already started off well, with so many photography-related things already planned. Exciting new workshops/tours, new photographic trips, publishings with new clients as well as offers of audio-visual presentations throughout Australia. One of the highlights is being chosen as the Keynote Speaker at the PSQ (Photographic Society of Queensland) Convention being held in Mackay (north Queensland) in early October 2013. The theme is 'Photographing In Your Environment', with full details released soon.

Over the past months, the numbers of subscribers to my newsletter have sky-rocketed! For all of the new subscribers, and to anyone else who doesn't know, I'd like to mention that I have nine previous photography newsletters that can be read and downloaded, each packed with lots of photographic information. You can access previous newsletters [here](#).

Photography, as a whole, is experiencing a huge hike in popularity around the world. There are so many new cameras being released with lots of amazing new features, loads of innovative software programs and apps entering our market and a huge influx of people getting into photography. I'm very excited by what the future holds and I look forward to sharing the wonderful world of photography with you all!



Cheers

*Michael*

# Photographic Tip of the Month

## Depth of Field (DOF) explained

When talking with participants of the photography workshops I present, especially those who are beginners or at an intermediate level, I often ask them to put their hand up if they don't know what 'depth of field' means and how to use it in photography. Without fail, there are always plenty of participants who raise their hand. Over the many years of being a photographic tutor, I have come to realise that this important topic is often misunderstood, yet is such a vital part of photography. In this article, I will explain depth of field in a way that is easy to understand and without the technical jargon.

Put quite simply, depth of field is 'the distance between the nearest and farthest objects in a scene that appear acceptably sharp in an image'. You can change the depth of field of your image by changing the camera's aperture or f-stop. A lower f-stop number such as f2.8 or f4 means a larger sized aperture whilst a higher number f-stop such as f16 or f22 means a smaller sized aperture. To many people learning photography, this numbering system seems reversed and can cause confusion.

For example, an f-stop of f2.8 or f4 might be perfect for photographing a flower stamen. The stamen will



*Shallow Depth of Field - Crimson Chat*

be in focus but the background will generally be blurred out. This makes the stamen stand out, without a 'busy' or distracting background. You may also want to use an f-stop, for example, of f16 to photograph the same flower stamen. The difference in using f16 compared to using a wider aperture is that with f16 more of the flower is in focus, as will be the background. It is important to note that neither f-stop is right or wrong, as it depends on the look you are trying to achieve in your image.



*Large Depth of Field - Tasmanian Landscape*

When photographing wildlife at a distance with an SLR (Single Lens Reflex) camera and a zoom lens that has a decent focal length such as 300mm or 400mm, a wider aperture (i.e. f4 or f5.6) is generally recommended. The wide aperture helps separate the animal from the background. It also creates a faster shutter speed due to more light being let in, which helps when hand-holding the camera and lens.

For landscapes, especially when using a wide-angled lens, a smaller aperture (i.e. f16) is often recommended, as most of your scene will be in focus. Since the aperture is smaller in size, it lets a lot less light onto the camera's sensor to obtain the correct exposure. A slower shutter speed in your camera, if hand-held, will therefore create a blurry image, which is why a sturdy tripod is needed to minimise camera movement. Using a remote or cable release (or the camera's self-timer, if you don't own either) will also reduce any movement caused by pressing the shutter button with your finger.

Using your f-stop numbers correctly will certainly improve your photography, as you will be in control of the depth of field for each photo. Depth of field is, without doubt, one of the most important aspects of photography.

# Photographic Location of the Month

## Kangaroo Island

I first went to Kangaroo Island, south of Adelaide, South Australia, on a photographic trip in 2010. From the moment I arrived, I fell in love with this delightful island. As a lover of both nature and photography, I soon realised that this island has it all...

With a coastline measuring 509 kms in total and a distance of 155 kms from east to west, Kangaroo Island is quite a decent sized island and many people are quite surprised by the enormity of it. The good thing about this is that there are plenty of photogenic landscape locations, especially for sunrises and sunsets. Some of the more photogenic locations include Remarkable Rocks, which create a wonderful backdrop for a sunrise shoot and the gorgeous Vivonne Bay, which is great for photographing sunsets at. There is also Western River Cove and Pennington Bay, sand dunes at Little Sahara (aptly named) and Cape du Couedic Lighthouse, to name but a few.



*Juvenile Australian Sea Lion*

Kangaroo Island is also quite famous for its wildlife. Thankfully, there are few feral animals on this island so many species have been able to thrive here quite well. Some of the species found include koalas, Australian sea lions, New Zealand fur seals, Tamar wallabies, western grey kangaroos, pelicans, goannas, echidnas, Cape Barron geese and much more.



*Nankeen Kestrel*

One of the 'must see' places to visit on Kangaroo Island is the renowned bird of prey show, at 'Raptors Domain'. There are ample opportunities to photograph both the birds in flight as well as a few close-up shots. Species on the day may include the Wedge-tailed Eagle, Barn Owl, Barking Owl, Laughing Kookaburra, Nankeen Kestrel, Australian Hobby and the delightful Tawny Frogmouth.

Kangaroo island can be accessed a number of ways. For interstate people, you can fly into Adelaide and then catch a Rex Air flight to Kingscote, where you can hire a car at the airport. If you are driving, you can head to Cape Jervis and take

your car across on the Sealink Ferry, which takes you to Penneshaw on the island. You will then be able to use your own car while there.

If planning a trip such as this all sounds a bit too difficult, especially if you haven't been to Kangaroo Island before, you can always join an organised photographic workshop/tour. I'm currently doing the research and preparation for five day workshop/tour on Kangaroo Island and am heading there in a number of weeks to do a 'reccy'. The proposed five day workshop be presented with my Trekabout Photography Workshop co-owner, Mark, this coming spring. Details will be released on our Trekabout website, Facebook page and to our database, sometime in March 2013.

## Inspirational Photographers

### Paul Nicklen

The photographer I have chosen as an 'inspirational photographer' for this issue of my photography newsletter is Paul Nicklen. Paul has been a specialist polar region photographer since 1995 and his work has always evoked an immediate response from me.

Whether it's capturing split-second wildlife behaviour, an emotional wildlife portrait or a stunning, moody landscape scene, Paul's work is simply stunning. As a fellow wildlife and nature photographer, I know how much patience goes into capturing that 'special' shot and with Paul having so many of these in his image library, I can only imagine the hours/days/weeks he puts into getting particular shots.

Being a National Geographic photographer is, without doubt, the pinnacle of wildlife and nature photography. To date, Paul has 10 articles published in this reputable magazine that feature his stunning work.

To see more of Paul Nicklen's work, click [here](#).

## Photography Competitions



### Australian Geographic/ANZANG Nature Photography Competition

Australian Geographic has teamed up with ANZANG Nature Photographer of the Year to become Australia's largest nature photography competition. The prize money for the winning image alone is near \$40 000! For more details about the Australian Geographic/ANZANG Nature Photography Competition, click [here](#)

## Trekabout Photography Workshops

After a successful 2012, Trekabout Photography Workshops have another workshop-filled year coming up!

**New workshops/tours include:**

### Six day 'Tropical North Queensland Experience' (28th of April to the 4th of May 2013)

Come and spend six days in Tropical North Queensland with Mark and myself and experience the most photogenic locations and subjects this area has to offer. Locations we will visit include Palm Cove (Cairns) at sunrise, a sunset shoot overlooking Double Island, the amazing Mossman Gorge for rainforest photography, Stony Creek cascades, the Atherton Tablelands and Kuranda, to name but a few.



Butterfly at Kuranda Butterfly Farm

We will also visit a butterfly farm, photograph wildlife at the Cairns Wildlife Park, host a macro session as well as post-processing tuition, audio visuals and image critique.

If you would like to find out more about this wonderful workshop/tour in Tropical North Queensland, please click [here](#).



Sunrise over Tropical North Qld beach

## Five day 'Kangaroo Island Experience' (spring 2013)

Trekabout's five day 'Kangaroo Island Experience' workshop/tour is now in the planning stages. This island is renowned for not only its stunning landscapes, but also its abundant wildlife. We plan to include many of the iconic photographic locations (including the best sets for sunrises and sunsets) as well as take you to the best wildlife locations. Kangaroo Island really is a photographer's paradise. **Full details revealed in March 2013!**



*Scratching juvenile Australian Sea Lion*

Interest in a Kangaroo Island photography workshop/tour has been extremely high, so if you would like to add your name to an 'Expressions of Interest' list, please email me [here](#) and I will send you full details before the release of the workshop to the general public.

Below are some of our regular photography workshops/tours:

## Five day 'Mountain Experience' (Lamington National Park - Qld) – 3rd to the 8th of March 2013



*Sunset over Kerry Valley – Qld*

Our five day 'Mountain Experience' has always been one of my favourite workshops. Having lived in Lamington National Park (at O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat) for many years and photographed every conceivable location and subject within the park, I'm very familiar with the most photogenic places to head to, in order to get the best shots. As I am friends with the O'Reilly family and management, I have also been able to negotiate a great deal on accommodation for anyone attending this workshop.

If you would like to spend five days in early March 2013 in the World Heritage Listed Lamington National Park, in the Gold Coast hinterland, photographing some of the best subjects and locations that nature can offer, then click [here](#) for more details.



*Regent Bowerbird*

## Other Extended Trekabout Workshops and Tours Include:

Three day '[Fraser Island Experience](#)' (Qld) - April 2013

Seven day '[Red Centre Experience](#)' (Northern Territory) - June 2013

Three day '[Girraween Experience](#)' (Qld)- September 2013

Seven day '[Norfolk Island Experience](#)' - November 2013

We are also continuing to present our regular half day, full day and weekend workshops, all of which can be viewed in full detail on our website [here](#)

## Trekabout Photo Competition

Congratulations to Kerry Newton for winning the November/December 2012 Trekabout photography competition, themed 'Nature', as well as all the other place-getters and highly commended recipients. Instead of Mark and I choosing the winning images, we let the public vote for this competition. Kerry's beautiful landscape image received the highest number of votes (25) and was declared the winner.



*Winning image – Kerry Newton*

The current photo competition is themed 'Summer'. Entries close at midnight on the 28th of February 2013. There are five prizes on offer, totalling over \$800.00 in value and entry is totally free!

For more information on how to enter Trekabout's Photography Competition, click [here](#).

## Other Extended Workshops

### Eight Day 'Bowra Birding and Photography Experience' (1st to 8th of August 2013)

*Only two places left in vehicles and two places left for tag-along participants!*

After successfully booking-out each of the last three Bowra bird photography workshops, I'm pleased to announce that Barry Davies, professional birding guide, and I are again presenting this ever-popular photography tour in early August 2013. As one of Australia's leading bird guides, Barry has the uncanny knack of finding loads of different birds throughout the eight days of the tour and I will use my 17 years of experience as a bird photographer to ensure that there will be lots of bird photography tuition and opportunities available for participants.

We do all of the work for you, so all you need to do is be ready to be picked up in Brisbane, your camera gear and sense of adventure ready! All transport, accommodation, meals and tuition is included in the price (there are also tag along places available for participants with their own vehicle).

As a lover of bird photography and the Australian outback, I absolutely love presenting this tour with Barry. To be able to share my passion and skills with participants just makes this trip all the more special. For more details on the eight day 'Bowra Birding and Bird Photography' workshop/tour, click [here](#).



*Splendid Fairy Wren*

### Seven day 'Tasmanian Experience' Photography Workshop - November 2012 - Report



*Sunrise over Dove Lake and Cradle Mountain - Tasmania*

In late November 2012, I presented a seven day photography workshop/tour in Tasmania, with professional landscape photographer, Luke O'Brien. We picked up our participants by bus in Launceston and drove straight to Cradle Mountain, where we spent two days and three nights. We stayed at the deluxe Cradle Mountain Chateau and were treated with scrumptious food. The weather was stunning, the scenery sublime and photographic subjects were around every corner – a photographer's paradise! An absolute highlight, which Luke and I, as well as the workshop participants will never forget was the stunning sunrise we encountered on our second morning, down at Dove Lake.

After Cradle Mountain, we drove across to Liffey Falls for some rainforest and waterfall photography, before heading to our base at 'Beachfront at Bicheno' on the Freycinet Coast. There we photographed a sunrise at Friendly Beaches and a sunset at Coles Bay, as well as taking a half day cruise in Wineglass Bay. Without doubt, the highlight of the cruise was a pod of dolphins virtually 'playing' with our boat for nearly 20 minutes, leaping in and out of the water two and three at a time, trying to keep up with the boat! Camera shutters were going off at full speed all around the boat.



*Leaping dolphin*



*Tasmanian workshop participants  
- November 2012*

The identical Tasmanian workshop/tour that Luke and I are presenting in **March 2013 has only four places left**. If you are interested in attending, click [here](#) for more details.

## One-on-One Tuition



### Two day One-on-One Photography Tuition Sessions in south-east Queensland National Parks

**W**ould you like to spent two days with me in stunning, natural environments with a friend or fellow-photographer and be shown the best places to photograph, and how to best photograph them? My two day one-on-one photography tuition sessions have received fantastic feedback from former attendees and each two day itinerary is geared towards your exact interests and needs.

#### Locations include:

- Girraween National Park – Qld (approx 3.5 - 4 hours drive from central Brisbane)
- Mt Barney National Park – Qld (approx 1.5 -2 hours drive from central Brisbane)
- Bunya Mountains National Park – Qld (approx 3 hours drive from central Brisbane)
- Lamington National Park – Qld (approx 1.5 -2 hours drive from central Brisbane)

For more information on this amazing opportunity, click [here](#)

## Photo of the Month

### Andrew Goldsworthy

**F**or each of my photography newsletters, I choose a keen photographer who I feel deserves some recognition for his or her work. For this issue, I have chosen Andrew Goldsworthy. Here is what Andrew has to say about the photo he has chosen for 'Photo of the Month':

*Firstly I would like to thank Michael for this invite to include an image of mine and to write about it in his newsletter. I first met Michael at a workshop on Norfolk Island with his business partner in Trekabout Photography Workshops, Mark. Like a lot of you, I went to this workshop thinking I was*

*fairly good, only to come to the realisation that I had a lot to learn. That workshop was two years ago and reviewing the images from back then to now I can see the improvements and hope to keep on improving.*

*The brief I got was to present a memorable nature image and talk a bit about it. I decided on this image of the Archways Islands in NZ for two of reasons. Firstly because this is the first trip I have done where my specific goal was landscape photography, rather than fitting some opportunity shots into a holiday schedule. The second reason is turning up to a location with a preconceived idea of how I want my final image to look, but the conditions were against me and then deciding whether to give up or get what I can (sound familiar?).*

*This image is of the Archway Island at Wharariki beach; I was aiming for a sunset through one of the arches but was greeted with a windy overcast day that wasn't promising. After about two hours of wandering along the beach I found this sheltered location that allowed me to frame one of the islands between some rocks and the cliff on the right*

**Settings: D7000, F32, 1/6 sec ISO100 using a 10-20mm sigma @ 20mm, some editing with ACR and cropped to 11X14 (it's going on my wall!).**

