

FOCUS

PAGHAM PHOTOGRAPHERS CLUB NEWSLETTER.



March 2021

Welcome to our second newsletter hopefully you will find it enjoyable and a means of keeping in contact with us and your love of photography whilst we are in lockdown.

We are holding monthly Zoom meetings for members and have revamped our website to include videos of Zoom meetings so we have our sessions saved for members to look at and enjoy. We are currently planning our Zoom meetings over the current months until we can get back together again.

We have an excellent Outings programme ready to swing into action once we are allowed to meet outside as a group. The latest government roadmap suggest this will be after 17 May. Watch out for further news on this in next month's FOCUS.

Evening face to face meetings look as if they will be possible at the start of our 2021-22 programme in September. We have already prepared a schedule of our activities over that year and will publish that nearer the time.

We are putting a lot of effort into keeping the club running which seems to be paying off, we would love more members to join us at our Zoom meetings held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 8pm. The meetings have so far been 40 minutes but we've found this extremely difficult to manage with so much to cover. From March onward we will add a further session of 40 minutes starting 10 minutes after the first session ends. This gives everyone time to make a tea or coffee and will allow us to present our topics far better.

We also have new members joining us regularly and are embarking on a publicity drive to gain more members. During these frustrating times we believe joining us even though it is by Zoom is a great way of relieving the boredom and helping to develop a new hobby.

Enjoy the newsletter and do go to our website and catch-up on all that is going on, in particular please visit the competition page and vote for the picture of the month. You will find us at: paghamphotographers.club

Looking forward to seeing you all again in September.

Iain Balch

CONTENT

Lens ball photography

Technical Advice

January Photo Task winner

Camera Maintenance

Photograph of the month

Tanzanian Safari photos

Please submit suggestions for articles for inclusion in the future issue to Bev.

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Introduction to LENS BALL photography by Peter Beavis

Some photographers I know are unaware of the fun and creativity to be enjoyed taking photographs that include the view through a lens ball also known as a glass ball placed at a chosen distance between the camera and the subject. Technically it is an external lens optic.

Years ago I obtained a fish eye lens for my 35mm SLR camera which gave me the opportunities to take fun shots of my family, landscapes and buildings. In digital times I had ignored fish eye until one afternoon in Spice Island, Portsmouth I stood next to a couple of photographers who were using their glass ball to shoot the view of Gunwharf area and the harbour entrance. It took my interest and they lent it to me use with my smartphone. Liking the results, I searched on YOUTUBE for practical information and ordered from Amazon which offers plenty of choice for supply. For £15.00 plus postage it arrived next day from Belle Vous one of recommended suppliers. In the box was also a small lens ball stand.

Recently I have joined a number of FACEBOOK groups focused on lens ball photography which provide user's advice and a very comprehensive gallery of photographs taken from around the world. I suggest two groups as an introduction:

LENSBALL PHOTOGRAPHY

LENSBALL/GLASSBALL PHOTOGRAPHY WORLDWIDE

The ball uses refraction, the distortion of light that is bent as it passes through an object of denser mass. The effective focal length is similar given by a fish eye lens.

My ball is 80mm diameter considered the most popular size which weighs about 1.5 lbs. The size and weight enable me to carry in a jacket pouch pocket or bag

Being a ball it is necessary to place it on a surface where it cannot roll about. If the surface it is placed on cannot steady the ball, I use the glass stand if that is likely to happen. Facebook group photographs illustrate a wide range of alternative holders such as candle sticks, camera tripods, bottles and ornaments.

Hand holding the ball appears to be very popular especially when using a smart phone. It just takes a little practice to minimise the extent of the fingers in the shot without the risk of dropping it. Should it drop on to a soft surface damage is unlikely, just wipe clean.

The photograph taken will always have the view through the ball inverted. There are choices in post processing to flip the photograph or cut out the ball part and reinsert it. During post processing the lens ball photographs can produce very satisfying creations and another dimension for your photography.

Technical Advice by Jennifer Rowbotham

Can I use any lens on my camera?

If you are the proud owner of a camera with interchangeable lenses, most likely a DSLR (digital single lens reflex) or a CSC (compact system camera), you may have wondered about what lenses you can use on your camera and maybe even gone a bit misty eyed over the sight of an old telephoto lens on sale for £20 while you envisage a future where you become a wildlife photographer extraordinaire (move over Steve Bloom).

There are literally thousands of camera lenses on the market, new and old, so the choices can be bewildering, especially if it's all new to you. In the most simple terms it is not as easy as any lenses fitting on any camera, so the basic answer to the question posed above would be 'no', but as with pretty much everything in life, it is much more in depth than a one word answer!

For most cameras there is a good selection of lenses available that have been made specifically to fit and fully function on said camera, meaning you wouldn't normally need to look further unless prompted by curiosity or budget. Perhaps most obvious when it comes to native fit lenses, would be those made by the camera manufacturer themselves (although it is still important to note that there are different mounts and compatibility issues within individual brands) there are also third party manufacturers such as Sigma, Tamron and Tokina who make their lenses in a range of mounts. Getting confused? It sounds more complicated than it often is! If you're buying online check the compatibility details and if buying in store, try to buy from a dedicated camera retailer where you can tell them exactly what camera you have (be specific about the model, not just the brand) and they can help guide you to something appropriate.

See following page for hopefully helpful, but by no means exhaustive, list of some of the more common systems/mounts currently on the market.

You may at some point want to look beyond native/fully compatible lenses, to explore the wealth of older lenses available second hand, often at very attractive prices. If you're a Nikon user there are many older lenses that will physically fit on your camera but may not work as you expect, for example AF-D lenses are capable of autofocus but only when attached to a body with an inbuilt focus motor. If your camera doesn't have this then you can still use the lens, but in manual focus only. Even older Nikon lenses may still be useable BUT in an entirely manual capacity with aperture being controlled by a ring on the lens itself.

If you want to use a lens with a different mount from the camera, you can buy adaptors online for pretty much every possible combination of camera and lens which, for example, would allow you to mount an old Olympus OM fit lens from the 1980's on to a modern Sony CSC. These adaptors can be had for anything from about £5 to hundreds depending on the mounts in questions and the complexity. With most options, particularly at the cheaper end of the scale, you will be shooting fully manually as, due to a lack of any electronic contacts on the adaptor or lens to pass information between, the camera will not recognise there is any lens attached to it and thus you may have to set your camera to 'fire without lens attached'. Shooting in this way is quite involved so I would generally only recommend it if you're already a confident manual shooter, or a really determined person with plenty of time to experiment! The other adaptors you're likely to come across are those designed by the camera manufacturers themselves, for adapting their SLR mount lenses on to their newer CSC systems and while these often come with their own quirks, they have much greater compatibility than the other type mentioned above.

So to sum up, there is nothing wrong in experimenting with lenses, but if you're looking to move away from anything fully compatible with your camera, just make sure you do your research first and know what you're letting yourself in for.

Common systems/mounts currently on the market

Camera type	Lens mount	Further details
Nikon DSLR	F	DX (cropped sensor) FX (full frame)
Canon DSLR		EF-S (cropped sensor) EF (full frame)
Sony DSLR/SLT	A/alpha	DT (cropped sensor)
Nikon Z CSC	Z	Z DX (cropped sensor)
Canon R CSC	RF	
Canon M CSC	EF-M	
Sony CSC		E (cropped sensor) FE (full frame)
Olympus/Panasonic CSC	MFT (micro four thirds)	
Fuji CSC	X	

Nigel Flint's Pagham harbour photo wins the January photo task Leading Lines



Camera maintenance

Making sure your camera is always at the best operating status

The first thing is to make sure that your Optics are clean. In order to do this, you are going to need Microfibre cloths, a brush, and a lens cleaning solvent.

When you start cleaning optics, you have got to be very careful, especially if you have been near a beach or somewhere where there is a lot of dust, sand, etc.

You may have grit on the front of your lens or other places, and it's always best to remove that with a brush before you start rubbing it around with a cloth, because that is likely to start causing scratches.

There are various places where these dust items can collect. One common place is in the recess of the eyepiece.

It is worth bearing in mind, that anything you see through the viewfinder, is unlikely to appear on any photograph you take, because of the route the light takes.

Another spot where dust can collect is under the pentaprism, or on the focusing screen.

Those are the main points, if you're looking through the viewfinder, that you may see bits of dust.

Again, it is always best to start with a brush, and when you use the microfibre cloth, spray the cleaner solvent on the cloth, not on to the optics.

Wipe around and give an initial clean, and then afterwards, use a second dry cloth to give a final clean and polish.

When you start seeing spots on your photographs. They are almost certainly on the Sensor and not anywhere in the path that the light takes when looking through the viewfinder.

Cleaning spots on the sensor is best left to the experts, although your camera may have a system, that when you switch your camera on, it does a little vibration of the sensor, to shake dust off.

If dust spots on your photographs are not too bad, they are easily removed in post processing. Most software has a spot healing brush, a little circle you can place over the spot, and click to remove it.

If you are going to attempt to clean the sensor yourself, you really need to know what you are doing, because you can cause some serious damage.

Format the Memory Card.

Another routine that helps keep your camera in good nick, is to regularly format the memory card. After you have downloaded your photos to your computer or other storage device. It is always best to go through the format routine, because your memory card will collect little pieces of data that can build up over time, and reduce the number of photos it will hold.

Scroll through the cameras menu, and somewhere you will find "Format Card". Select this, and you will most likely see a warning that all data (photos) will be removed.

Update Firmware.

On your computer, go to your camera manufacturer's web site, selecting updates for your particular camera model, and you will find "Firmware"

Usually there are versions for both Windows and Mac operating systems. Showing the current firmware version.

Scroll through your camera's menu, and you will find the version currently installed.

To update this is quite a long process, which needs a separate session at some other time.

Photograph of the month appraisal by Barry Gee

Soft focus photography



This photo by Linda Dance is an excellent example of a soft focus image.

The soft-focus technique is a way of photographing things so that the edges of the objects in the photograph are relatively not sharp or clear. Soft focus technique is used for reducing the local contrast in an image, and also for adding a kind of dreamy glow. It is often achieved by adding a soft focus filter to the camera or using a smearing of Vaseline around the edges. It cannot be achieved simply by defocusing the camera. It is a technique in itself.

I applaud Linda for this image which is in my estimation expertly done, a lovely example.

As a member of the club you are invited to submit an illustrated article about one of your holidays or a subject that you can share with other members. Please submit details to Bev Page at: pagegirl10@gmail.com

It could be a tour of a local place ie Chichester Canal or out of our area such as the following wonderful scenes from Iain Balch when he went on an **Tanzanian Safari**.

It is a long flight to Kilimanjaro via Doha especially when there is a half mile scramble to change planes in the middle of the night. However 3 planes and 17 hours later we stepped out of the airport in Kilimanjaro to be met by our first Tanzanian bird - a Starling - Superb you might say - yes it was a Superb starling.



Not long after we were met by our trusty driver and 4x4 that would take us first to Tarangire to start our safari. No time off for good behaviour, it was straight off the plane and on to the safari. We were looking forward to our first Tanzanian wild animal and here it is:-



A Ground Squirrel enjoying the contents of a waste bin.. Things started to look up though next was an Ant Nest in a Whistling Thorn tree



Enough we thought, 17 hours plus a lot of money later and all we see next is an upside down tree - a Baobab



But at last our trusty driver spots some monkeys frenetically screaming some way to our right so we turn round and do a semi-circular journey to the other side of them and half a mile later we see our first Cheetah



and then our first Elephant drinking out of a small hole he had just dug to get some water



and our first Giraffe



Things were definitely improving for here was my favourite animal posing for us



This brought romantic thoughts to me.. you guessed, Yellow-collared Lovebirds



And not far from an interesting Termite Hill



Ostriches mating



This was all too much for two weary travellers so we made our way to our modest ensuite canvas lodge



We stayed here for two more days leaving eventually for the Ngorongoro Crater via Lake Manyara. The Ngorongoro Crater is between 10 and 12 miles wide and 600 metres deep. It has most animals but for some reason not the Giraffe - -probably because the sides are too steep

Here it is in all its splendour:



First off was Aslan (Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe for those that need to be told)



Zebra



Hippopotami with Black Crake



Thompson's Gazelle looks like 2 heads



Sacred Ibis



Kori Bustard largest African flying bird



Grant's Gazelle



and an 'Ornery Buffalo



but there are also some tranquil spots away from the wildlife, but not from the hippos of course



So much more to show but now it's off to the north of Tanzania and the Mara River famous for.....

The Wildebeest Crossing



But there are plenty of other exciting sights:



Mwanza Flat-headed Agama



Spotted Hyena



Mummy Rhino with calf



Lilac-breasted Roller



Olive Baboon



Secretary Bird

And our favourite Leopard



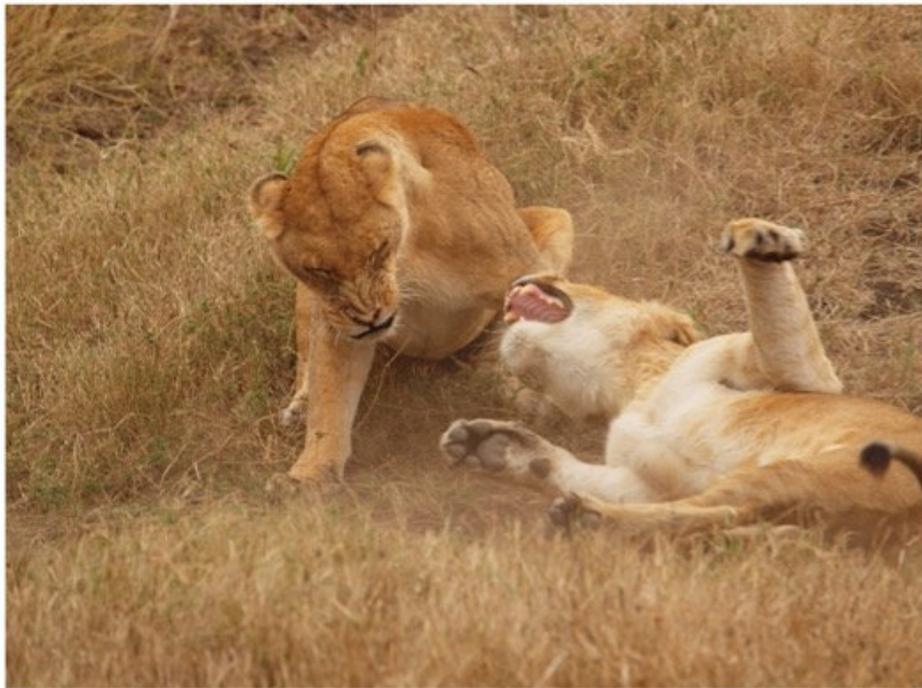
So back to our modest en-suite tent (not lodge up here as it has to be packed away every 6 months and moved south to follow the Wildebeest migration along with all the rubbish - the Tanzanian authorities are extremely strict and rightly so)



But I will leave you with a lovely short sequence of a lioness trying to get her cub to cross a stream in the Ngorongoro Crater - we were only 5 or 6 metres away from the whole episode



And so to the other side



where another lioness started to dry the cub which did not please the mother.....

That's it folks as they say - hope you enjoyed it and the club is looking forward to sharing your photographs with us

Have fun Iain Balch