



An Introduction to nature photography

What is nature photography?



- **Photographing:**
 - **Birds**
 - **Animals**
 - **Butterflies & moths**
 - **Dragonflies**
 - **Insects**
 - **Flowers**
 - **Clouds**

What is nature photography?



- A very broad subject
- We will only cover an introduction to bird and animal photography tonight
- Firstly the real basics



What to wear and where?

- Don't wear bright coloured clothing!
- Don't stand in the open – find somewhere to hide yourself
- Settle down and move as little as possible
- Set your camera up for the shot
- Keep your camera up ready for a shot
- Turn off Focus Assist and flash etc.
- Try to have the sun or light behind you
- If no tripod – try to find somewhere to rest against if possible.
- If on a boat go with the motion



What Equipment do I need?

- **A camera of course**
 - Spare batteries
 - Spare memory cards
 - A Zoom lens preferably 400mm or greater

- **Optionally**
 - Tripod or sand bag or other mount
 - Remote release



What do I set the camera up to?

- Ideally you need to have a shutter speed of 1/1000th or more
- Set your aperture to f4 - f6.3 to blur the background
- ISO as low as you can get it
- Don't forget to switch on the image stabilizer
- Keep breathing normally

The above will be dependent on what your camera can cope with and what the light is like.

John for example with his Canon EOS 5D MkIV can shoot in almost any light as he can set his ISO to a very high figure >>1600

My old Olympus would not give good photos above ISO 400

Here is an example of what John can do



Canon EOS 5D MkIV f8 1/500th ISO 1600 150mm 2063x1504

Iain's old Olympus



Olympus E510 f11 1/160th ISO 400 500 mm 2962x2157



Pictures in better light



Olympus E620 f4.5 1/2000th ISO 400 400 mm 2258x1693 +0.7EV



Pictures in better light



Olympus E620 f5.6 1/500th ISO 400 320 mm 4032x3024 +0.7EV



Pictures in better light



Olympus E620 f5.6 1/1250th ISO 400 340 mm 4032x3024 +0.7EV



Sky background

How to get a good image of a bird flying against a bright background.

- Balance speed, aperture and ISO
- Exposure compensation is needed 2.0-2.3 EV
- Spot focussing if you can manage otherwise use centre-weighting
- Flying birds need practice to keep the focussing point on the bird – if unsure use centre-weighting



Sky background



Olympus E-620 f7.1 1/100th ISO 200 220mm +2.3EV 4032x3024

Sky background



Olympus E-620 f7.1 1/100th ISO 200 220mm +2.3EV 1439x1080

Hidden in trees with sky background



Olympus E-620 f7.1 1/100th ISO 200 800mm +2.3EV 4032x3024
Histogram adjusted to bring out darker colours

Hidden in undergrowth



Olympus E-510 f5.6 1/25th ISO 400 600mm 3648x2736
Taken crawling on hands and knees @ 5m

Here is where to use a tripod



Olympus E-620 f6.3 1/800th ISO 400 400mm +1.3EV 3115x2336

Lucky shots



Olympus E-620 f6.3 1/1000th ISO 400 600mm +1EV 1755x987
Taken up country in The Gambia – Fork-tailed Drongo v Senegal Parrot



Lucky shots



Panasonic DMC-FZ5 f5.6 1/400th ISO 80 500mm 2080x1560

Taken in 2006 with a 5mp camera on a rolling boat in the Southern Ocean off Dunedin



A few animal shots The tourist view



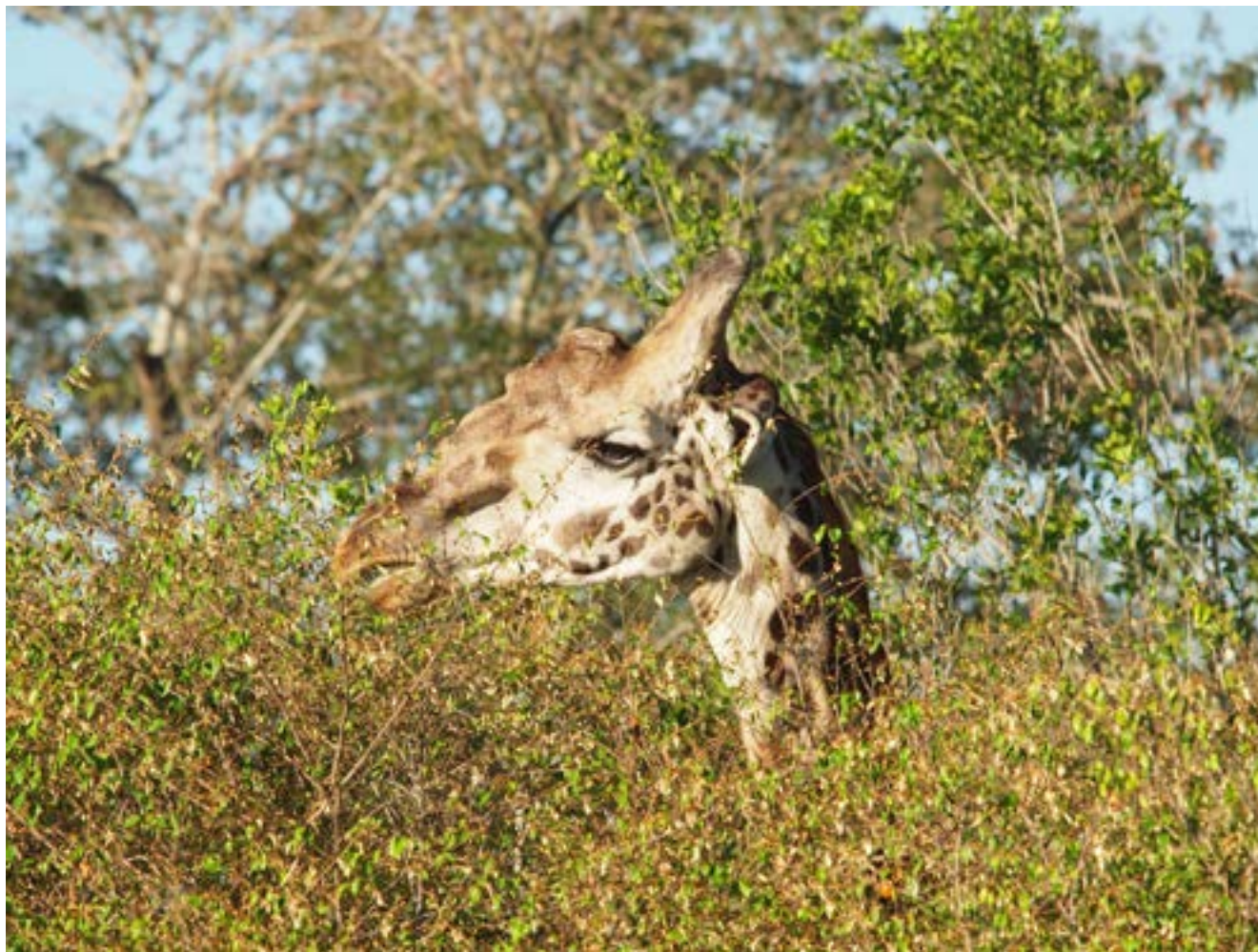
Olympus E-620 f5 1/1000th ISO 400 400mm 4032x3024 +0.7 EV

An ornery Buffalo



Olympus E-620 f3.5 1/1000th ISO 400 260mm +0.7EV 3865x2899
Always try to get the eyes

A hidden Giraffe



Olympus E-620 f5 1/1000th ISO 400 400mm +0.7EV 4032x3024

Hippo games



Olympus E-620 f7.1 1/200th ISO 200 800mm 4032x3024
See the eye watching me



Summary

- Know your camera's limitations – mine was ISO 400 upper limit
- Keep your speed up you need $1/\text{speed} > \text{zoom length}$
- Take plenty of shots
- Get your camera in position well before you want to take a shot
- Rest against something if possible or use tripod
- Don't stop breathing
- Don't wear a red anorak if you want to see anything....
- No talking!
- Enjoy yourself!