

Whanganui Camera Club

Thank you for inviting me to judge your images, it has been good to see such a variety of nature subjects from your club. I do hope my comments help you and if you disagree to them that is okay.

B Grade Open

Where to from Here

This was a great idea to have taken this image looking up a narrow pathway of steps. The leaves give it interest in the foreground. I would suggest you crop off the dark area below the leaves where there is no interest. This has a dark moody feeling to it and the white area is where it catches my eye. To improve this photo I would like to see a little more saturation and make it lighter to give it impact.

B Grade Nature

A Little Gem

This Magnolia or Michelia flower is stunning. The petals are perfect and the centre shows so much detail of its patterns and textures. It is well placed in the frame. A good effort, well seen.

Honours

Eyes bigger than the belly

You have spotted a spider with its prey, a large moth. Well seen. I can see the hairs on the spiders legs and seeing the moths eye is an added bonus. If you had used a tripod with a larger F stop eg F16 you would have the image more focused. However this is a good effort.

Gleeful Gannet

What a beautiful bird this is, the colouring on gannets are stunning. You have caught its blue eye and golden head well. I would like to see more space in front of its beak, do not crop it so tightly. Just another small suggestion if you have taken this bird from a lower position you would have captured its eye on a better angle.

Merit

Having a Chat.

I also have silvereyes coming into my feeder here in Nelson, they are quick so you have to wait and get close to get a good image. Sadly half of this image has no interest in it, also there is too much red bowl and wood showing. I need to see more of the birds filling the frame. Play around watching at different angles and you will manage to capture the birds at a closer view point.

Humpback Whale Wave.

How wonderful it is to see whale's fluking. I watched so many in Antarctica right in front of me, you can never see enough of this incredible action. This is well placed in the frame just off centre and seeing the barnacles on the tail gives it added interest. A good effort.

Highly commended

I know my nest is somewhere down there.

I see you have captured this raptor carrying nesting material over the rocky face in the cloud.

Well spotted. However most of this image is showing me cloud which has nothing of interest. The bird is your focal point so that should take up most of the frame to give impact.

It takes two blue glass snails

I love the idea of photographing snails. You have placed them well in the frame showing me the patterns on the shells and the blue slimy snails give this good contrast in colour from the leaf that they are on. For improvement you could have them more sharply focused, however you have done well.

Highly commended

Mantis Death Swan

You have spotted this mantis which appears dead and floating on water. This mantis has lovely patterns and markings on its wings. What lets this down is its body the yellow part and its back wings are not in focus.

Narcissus Bird Kakadu

You have spotted this unusual bird well, I love the patterns of its feathers and a real plus to see its eye. I would like to see this closer or cropped more. There is nothing of interest in three quarters of this frame, so get closer if possible.

Pelican in flight

It isn't easy to photograph a bird in flight, however you have given this a good try on a cloudy day. It is well placed in the frame with the pelican flying into it from the left. What I'd like to see is more of the head and beak rather than the back view, however that isn't easy when they are flying away from you.

Pelican just taking off

This image shows me more of its beak and head. My eye goes to the out of focus wing which is in the centre of the page. If you put your ISO higher on your camera and the speed faster you will get a much sharper image.

Pied Stilt.

These are such elegant birds which I photograph regularly here in Nelson. I would like to see more space on the left where the stilt is walking towards. Once again I would love to see a sharper image of the bird to give more impact and definition.

Pinnacles Wairarapa

This was a good idea to have entered these pinnacles into a nature competition. I can see the stony structures in the columns, however the dark shady foreground pinnacles lets this image down. If you had taken a close up of the pinnacles showing the vegetation growing on them with the blue sky it would be more interesting. Wander around and look for a scene without high contrasting areas in it.

Sceptical Sparrow

Here is a little cute sparrow looking down at you all fluffed up. Because they are common we don't always appreciate these birds, when you see them closely they have lovely markings on their feathers. I like seeing its eye and beak well, just a pity most of the bird is not in focus, keep practising by putting your F stop higher in numbers to get more depth of field.

Shag

You have seen this shag drying its wings showing me its eye and head by looking at you. The trees on the sides frame this well. It is a pity that this whole photo is so grainy maybe you have cropped it too hard.

Simply delicious

You have taken this image on the side of the dalia showing mainly one wing of the monarch. To make this a stronger image I would like to see more of the butterfly by photographing it front on.

Thanks Mum

This has a wow factor showing a parent coot with a gorgeous chick. You have captured both coots well however I'd like to see this not so tightly cropped. The reflections in the water are good, so give more space around the whole photo and that will make a huge difference in viewing these beautiful coots.

Merit

Water lilies Kakadu

Water lilies always have a magnificent flower and that is your subject so I would like to see more flowers and less space especially on the bottom left corner. If you had taken a closer view of the leaves and flowers it would give it more impact.

Yellow spotted Bell frog.

I would love to have seen these before they jumped away. You have seen a pair or a young and older one and captured them on a rock well done. I love seeing their eyes, patterns and markings. The green toning of the smaller one gives added interest to the whole image. The out of focus background is excellent making the frogs stand out. You could crop 3cms off the top if you prefer.

Well seen.

Honours

A Grade Open

Bull Line Dance

This is an interesting PJ image showing me plenty of action. It is well cropped and well seen. The poor fellow on the ground makes you wonder what happened to him next.

Highly Commended.

Carwash

You have taken this image while sitting in the car at the carwash. I would have never thought of photographing this. A great idea. As it is I feel it needs a focal point eg another colour to give it an added interest. My eye keeps going round looking for a focal point.

Corrugations

This has good texture, lovely blended colours with excellent patterns. I suggest you crop off 4cms off the left side which is out of focus and 2-3cms off the top which has no interest.

A Grade Nature

Miserable Day Dear what shall we do?

You have seen this pair of California quail on a fence, well spotted. For a nature competition I would like to see these birds closer and filling the frame more. As it is there is no interest in two thirds of the image. The male Quail is in focus but the female isn't in focus. Be patient and wait to see if the birds stand together.

Autumn Harvest

You have thought about this by setting the fruit up in a 'Still Life' setting. For nature I would like to see the fruit on the tree or under it in a natural setting situation. Also how about choosing unblemished fruit to photograph.

Dragonflies

You have seen these dragonflies mating and captured the moment. It isn't easy to photograph these as they often land on something that has a messy background, something you cannot do anything about. The

background of twigs and branches does distract you from your subject. Watch the focusing, the top insect is in focus but the bottom one is out of focus. A good try for a difficult subject.

Early Birds

This is a silhouette of sparrows and starlings sitting on a fence. I feel two thirds of the frame hasn't any interest and for a nature subject I would like to see more detail of the birds and a closer image of say 3 of them showing me their colour and markings.

Forest Gecko

You have captured the most important part of any animal, bird or insect. The head and eye is well focused and the detail of its markings in this area is excellent. The yellow leaf is a distraction, however I know you could not have removed it as it would have frightened the gecko. A good effort

Glade Sculpture

You have done well to have seen this old mossy tree stump. The twists on the trunk are stunning. I suggest you crop off all the right side to the black branch in the centre to remove all area where there is nothing of interest, and focus on the interesting stump.

In Flight

I presume this is a gull flying and you have slowed your settings down to give this this look or you have changed your image on the computer. For a nature image I need to see the bird well focused showing me much detail of the gull.

Lenticular Cloud

This is a beautiful nature scene, the lighting on the trees and mountain is soft giving it a moody feeling. The mist on the lake complements the cloud on the mountain. It is a stunning Taranaki image. I would suggest you give it a general scene title rather than just the cloud as that isn't the main focal point of interest the whole scene is.

Honours

Lichen

You have seen this coral lichen growing on moss and taken a general photo of it, however there is too much blank space above and around it giving no interest at all. I suggest you use a tripod set it up close to the lichen using a long exposure and then you will get much detail and definition of the lichen.

Mallard in Flight

You have captured this duck well with an out of focus background. It is well placed in the frame. I love seeing the detail of its colouring and patterns on the duck. Well focused with a good out of focus background.

Merit

Monarch got the Blues

What a clear sharp photograph this is. The Butterfly draws your eye to it immediately. It has impact, the detail on the butterfly & on the flowers is sharp and focused. For a nature photograph there is no need to put a border on the image, however you have done well. A good effort.

Honours

Nigella Seed head

This is an interesting garden seed head with a good out of focus background. I like the angle how the stem is placed coming in from the right. I would like to see something on this stem to give it impact such as the insect or another colour.

Oxysarcodexia varia on Red Dahlia pinnata

This image has impact. The detail of the flower petals and centre is well defined with excellent focusing. The fly gives the flower an added interest showing me great detail. I can see the hairs on its legs, the beautiful pattern on its abdomen and wings. Well seen and well taken

Highly commended

Praying Mantis Devouring Wasp

This is not an easy macro subject to take especially in difficult lighting. It is amazing how well I can see the hairs on the wasp and mantis. Also the claws holding the mantis is well seen. What lets this down is the dark background of shade.

Praying mantis with wasp

This is similar to the last one. I would have loved to have seen more depth of field of this image which would have shown me more of the mantis in focus. It certainly is interesting seeing parts of the wasp in the claws of the mantis.

Reaching Out

The daisy flowers are sharp with good light showing detail under the petals. For a nature photo I would like to see the centres showing me the stamens etc which are the most important part of the flower. Also the cropped flower head on the top of the image lets this down. I suggest you pick out 3-5 flowers and photograph them without the dark background of trees.

Rhododendron's luminosity

These flowers are beautiful with their soft tones showing me the stamens and pistil. This looks like water-coloured painting. You have chosen a head of flowers in perfect condition. Well seen. I would like to see a focal point of interest to give it impact.

Rock Formation

This is a simple sand pattern with a rock as the focal point of interest. If you turn it vertically it looks like a mangrove seedling with the rock holding the roots which makes it more interesting. For an improvement I'd like to see more patterns with more interest.

A Skylark carrying Cicada

Wow, this is well captured with excellent lighting showing me detail of the feathers, head, feet and even the cicada. I wonder how long you waited to have seen this. It isn't easy to capture a small bird with so much detail with a good overcast background. Well seen and well done

Honours

Standing out from the Crowd

You have captured this goat in a pen of goats at a show no doubt. You have managed to get the one close to you in focus giving this image a good point of interest. What lets this down is the white lines of lights on the top third in the frame. These lights are very distracting. For a nature image you need to take these goats outside in their natural environment eg in a paddock.

Sticky Beak

You have seen the Tui on a bottlebrush bush and have taken this photo out of the sunlight showing me its magnificent colours. I take a photo of Tuis most days here in Nelson, mainly before the sun comes up so its iridescent feathers don't burn out. You have captured the Tui and focused it well. However I would like the flower in the front of the image to be in focus to give more depth to the image.

Merit

The Little Dracophyllum Tree

It was a good idea to photograph an amazing Dracophyllum tree, we have several varieties in the Nelson region. It is extremely difficult to get a good image with a good plain background. Here you have clumps of white lichen on either side of the tree which distracts you from your subject the tree, watch your surroundings.

Twin Spine Spider

Well done spotting this unusual spider. The plain background is good, however if this had been sharply focused it would have gained an award.

We Three Ducks.

This made me smile to see 3 white ducks lined up waiting for their photo to be taken. The white cloud works well with the white ducks. For improvement I would have liked to have seen the ducks facing the sun instead of them facing into the shade.

Wild Ones

Red poppies give this impact and having them growing in the garden is a perfect nature choice. The out of focus yellow and green background is good and compliments the red colours. What lets this image down is the half poppy on the right, I suggest you picked this and maybe just left a red bud or something small that is red to give this balance

All the best to your club Rebecca Bowater FPSNZ AFIAP