

DPI	SET:Nature	Judge: Toya Heatley	
Name	Title	Result	Feedback
B Grade Set Subject	BS		
	BS Ants Feeding	Merit	The photographer has certainly gotten in very close to these ants. I am glad they are so tiny and we don't have to see how scary they look up close! I think this is one of those images that would look amazing if the photographer had attempted photostacking with it. I like the nicely in focus head of the back ant and the in focus body of the front ant. I would have scored this higher if the front ant was fully in focus. Great attempt at a macro image.
	BS Cave Beach	Highly Commended	Beautiful golden colours in the cliffs, with lots of details in the layers through the clay and rock. I would have liked to see a little of the detail inside the cave where we are left viewing black holes. The reflections on the wet sand add interest and balance to the image. Nicely lit and good composition.
	BS Got It	Honours	This is a good example of capturing a moving kingfisher as it comes in to land. I almost feel sorry for it as it has left the best part of the crab behind. It is a juvenile kingfisher, their beaks are much shorter than the parent/older birds. I like the composition with the nicely blurred background. The bird's eye is sharp and in focus. Well done!
	BS Kereru Feast	Accepted	It certainly is a feast for the kereru, and he/she appears to be enjoying it. It feels to me as if this image is very grainy and lacking in sharp clear detail. In my opinion the light appears to be very bright which would also contribute to the faded colours. I like the composition with the bird being the main focus of the image.
	BS Tea tree Moth	Merit	I have never seen one of these moths before and thank you for the opportunity to view it. The shallow depth of field has given great detail through the centre of the moth's body and the antenna. The wings are a little on the soft side in my opinion, and the eyes are not visible, however the black background really makes the subject stand out well. Good composition.
	BS White Cliff Boulders	Accepted	This is a nicely composed image of the boulders and I like the forest that surrounds them too. The overall colour of the image feels flat to me and if the opportunity presents itself, try shooting this at a different time of day, perhaps with late afternoon sun. Well seen.
A Grade Open	AO		
	AO Evening walk	Highly Commended	Beautiful light within this image, I like how the path is taking not only my eye, but the people within the image into the lighted space. It is all nicely framed by the darker trees. I do find the trees on the left side to be a little distracting and feel that the image might be stronger if a couple of them were cropped off. Lovely composition.
A Grade Set Subject	AS		
	AS Alpine Herb Field, Ruapehu. (Tom's Garden)	Accepted	This looks like a lovely spot of vegetation amid a harsh environment. The pop of yellow from the flowers gives the image a good life from the shadows areas to the left. I would have liked to see a little of the detail in the shaded areas. The water sprays coming from all directions add interest to the image.
	AS Black Shag	Accepted	This image feels very noisy to me and would benefit from some noise reduction in my opinion. The composition is good and the detail is in the feathers. I am just distracted by the noise.
	AS Caspian Tern in estuary	Accepted	The tern feels a little crowded by all the other birds around it. The feather detail is good and the catchlight in the eye is also very good. In my opinion, if the photographer moved a little to the right to reduce the distraction from the front bird the image might have been stronger. I am aware though that this is not always possible.
	AS Cirrus Cloud	Merit	The clouds in this image look like they are smoke from the island mountain. The wispy edges look like they have been painted in the sky with a paint brush. I like the beach in the foreground and the bird flying through gives depth to the image.
	AS Crane Fly	Honours	The detail captured in this fly is amazing. I feel like the fly is staring right at me as I view the image. I like the muted background and the shallow depth of field is perfect for this tiny insect. Lovely soft colour palette also adds to the image. Well done!
	AS Duckling in the Rain	Accepted	Ducklings are always very cute and this one is no exception. I like how the water droplets are so well defined, and the duckling's eye is clear and sharp. The image does feel a little flat colourwise. I would recommend adding a little fill light in post processing to give the image more punch. In my opinion the composition would be stronger if a little was cropped off the right side of the image so the duckling is not so central in the frame.
	AS FERN BIRD	Merit	I like the natural framing around the fern bird with the flax leaves. There is one to the right that is out of focus and in my opinion somewhat distracting. I would recommend cropping the image there to remove it, while still leaving the bird's tail intact. The detail in the bird is amazing, well done!
	AS Grey Heron	Accepted	This heron is in fact a white-faced heron (not a grey heron). The bird is obviously on the move as it is lifting its leg to move forward. The head appears to me as if it is a little out of focus, and there is no detail in the eye or beak. In my opinion the crop is too tight at the top and right, and I would recommend a small crop off the bottom. The feather detail in the bird's back is good.
	AS Heron on dawn flight	Accepted	A nice capture of two white-faced herons in flight. The tree in the image with its high reaching branches appears to steal the focus away from the two birds. This is one of those images where I feel that if the angle was different and the birds were the main focal point in the image, it would be much stronger.
	AS Hiding in plain sight!	Merit	These tiny fungi are often missed when walking in the bush. I like how they have been lit from underneath allowing the light to show through the semi translucent caps. Good composition.
	AS Just a Duck	Accepted	It might be just a duck, but the detail that has been captured in this image is sharp and the eyes are clear. The soft background doesn't distract from the duck.

	AS Juvenile Bateleur in the morning light	Merit	This is a bird I have not seen before. The eagle sits proud and ready on its perch, keeping a wary eye on the camera. I would like to see a little more of the feather detail. The Bird and the branches feel to me as if they are a little dark. I like the composition, which gives the bird plenty of room to move within the image, and the catchlight in the eye give life to the bird.
	AS Juvenile Ruru	Accepted	I love the way the ruru tilt their heads when they are looking at something. I am told it is how they gauge distance. There is some blue things around the leaves in the lower half of the image that I find distracting and some blown out patched at the top. I do like the nice detail and sharpness in the birds feathers and eyes. Well spotted, these birds are often not seen during the day.
	AS Kereru Springtime antics	Honours	This is a spectacular capture of the playful kereru in spring time as they vie for the best new shoots to eat. Both birds are fully in focus, sharp feather detail and splendid colours. Well done!
	AS Liverwort on trunk. Fiordland	Accepted	The fallen trunk is providing a home for the mosses and plants to grow on. As it lies right now, my mind can conjur up all sorts of animal shapes within it. I like the colours and composition is well balanced.
	AS Male Greenfinch Alighting	Accepted	There is certainly a story in this image, the bird appears to be landing by a tasty morsel. I would have liked to see some catchlight in the bird's eye. It is very dark and shadowed. There is also some distrating dark areas on the top right, I feel the image would be stonger without them and would recommend cropping to remove them. There is nice detail in the feathers and those claws look really sharp! I also like that there is a bit of movement visible in the wings.
	AS New Growth	Accepted	I am a little confused by this image. It is hard to tell if there are two plants growing in the bark, or if one is part of the main tree and one is a opportunist. I can certainly agree with the title, they are new growth. I would have found it more helpful to know what I was looking at. I do like the colours in the image as the green and red give a nice pop of colour to what would otherwise be a very brown image.
	AS NZ Bamboo Orchid	Accepted	Lovely soft pastels colours, complement the sparkling petals of the orchid. Composition is good and the flower draws me right into the center of it. I am a little distracted by the fhe soft focus in the middle of the flower, where I would have liked to see more detail. The texture of the outer petals creates interest.
	AS Oak Leaves	Accepted	I like the backlighting on these oak leaves, it makes them stand out from the background nicely. There is a lot of colour noise in the background that I find rather distracting and I feel the image would be stronger if it could be reduced in post processing. The composition does work for me.
	AS Oh ! Hello	Accepted	I didn't immediately see the young pup popping its head up, when I did the title made sense :) What a delightful facial expression it has on its face. The image overall feels a little bit dark to me and I think could be improved with a touch more light. There is lovely detail in both of the seals and their eyes are very clear! Well seen!
	AS Petroica longipes with Kikihia ochrina	Merit	This is one of those images that are so frustrating. The bird is always turning in the wrong direction, or a little too close. I love the detail in the robin's feathers, the eye is sharp and clear and the bug is a real bonus! I would have liked to have seen the entire tail of the bird and a little more room to the left of the bird. Well seen and captured!
	AS Ponga	Accepted	When I look at this ponga frond, I can see how nature imitates itself with the creation of the smaller fronds being of the same pattern. My eye is constantly wandering around this image looking for somewhere to settle, and as this happened the dark background appears to come forward. I can see no single focal point to settle on. I feel perhaps this image could be better if it was made at a different time of day, or different lighting, to give it more impact.
	AS Rough Hair Day	Merit	This is a super close capture of the white-faced heron. The focus is on the face and head, with the rest of the feathers being a little softer. In my opinion there should be more room in front of the bird's beak to give the impression of it having room to move. I also feel the image would be stronger if some of the bottom and left of the image was cropped. Beautiful detail in the eye and feathers surrounding the eye, and the beak is also nice and clear.
	AS Sibling Affection	Merit	The ducklings are gorgeous with their shiney black beaks and sharp clear eyes. Nice feather detail on the lighter patches. I find the use of the light vignette a little distracting and in my opinion, the image would be much stronger without it. I also feel that cropping a little off the top to remove the light twig on the left would also improve the overall image. Well seen.
	AS Silvereve (Zosterops lateralis)	Highly Commended	This is a stunning image of the silvereve among the blossoms. Lovely sharp, clear eye, good feather detail in most of the bird. The soft muted background adds depth to the image and allows the bird to be the main focus. Good composition and nice catchlight in the birds eye. If I was to recommend any improvements, it would be to crop a little off the bottom of the image to remove the blossom in the bottom right corner of the image. Well done!
	AS Silvereve Pair	Highly Commended	A cute pair of silvereves preening each other tells a great story togetherness and trust. Each year they pair off like this prior to the breeding season. I like the square crop on this image and the background, while bright, is not distracting from the birds. There is lovely feather detail in the right hand bird with clear eye and sharp beak. The second bird is a little softer. The composition is great.
	AS Steaming Thermal Pool	Accepted	Titles can be an important part of the story telling process in photography, and in this case I find that what I am reading and what I am seeing are conflicting. I can certainly see steam, but there is no evidence of a thermal pool that is clear to me. I see some branches and twigs that have obviously suffered in the hot steamy environment. I am left to assume that the pool is somewhere beneath the steam.
	AS Sth Island Robin	Merit	The friendly bush robins just love getting up close to people. The photographer has captured beautiful details in the robin's feathers and eyes. The bird is an absolute stunner. Composition wise, I feel like it has been cropped in too tight, or shot when the bird was too close. In my opinion the image would be stronger if the robin had more room around it.
	AS Stilt	Accepted	A good behaviour shot of the pied stilt preening. The reflection adds interest to the story. I find the lower band of sand to be very distracting and overall the image colours feel rather flat. This could be because the light on the day wasn't great, but usually when there is a reflection, there is sun somewhere. I would recommend adding a little contrast in post processing to make this image pop a little more.

		Accepted	I have struggled with this image. At first glance it looks to me like someone has added the 'sun' into the image. It doesn't feel connected to the rest of the image at all, and the jagged edges only reinforce the feeling that something is not quite right. I have given the photographer the benefit of doubt because I cannot be sure and awarded an acceptance.
	AS Sunset Durie Hill		
		Merit	A red billed gull collecting nesting material and taking off to carry it back to the nest site. I like how there is movement in the wings as they flap, yet the head, beak and cargo are all nicely in focus. There is a lot going on in the sand around the gull, and my eye is drawn to them. I believe the image could be stronger if some of the distractions were cropped out. The shadow below the gull almost looks like a bat in flight with the fuzzy bit of seaweed as a body. Lots in this image to inspire a creative mind storywise.
	AS Taking Off		
		Highly Commended	Tui with the sun shining on their feathers give such a glorious colour and the photographer has captured that colour nicely in this image. I feel that the partial flowers along the bottom of the image are a little distracting and that the image would be stronger if they were cropped off. I like the feather detail in the tui, and the lovely clear eye detail. Well seen.
	AS Tui		
		Honours & Overall Winner	This is one of those magic moments where you are happy you had your camera with you. The tui itself is beautiful on its own, but the bee being so close tells a real story. I suspect the bee was moments away from being dinner. I like the soft background of golds and greens and the diagonal lines created by the flax flower stalks. I would be very happy if I had captured this image and wouldn't change a thing. Well done!
	AS Tui on Flax Bush		
		Honours	Absolutely stunning! I love how the tinge of blue is starting to show on the fledglings feathers and the detail in the feathers is good too. Composition gives the young bird plenty of room to move within the frame and the eye and beak are sharp and clear. I also like the soft muted background which doesn't detract from the swallow but adds drama to the overall image. Well done!
	AS Welcome Swallow		
		Accepted	The heron is watching the water intently searching for food. The pose is good, showing some of the birds breeding plumage. In my opinion the reflection in the moving water doesn't add to the story, and overall I believe the image could be improved by cropping in closer to the heron from the bottom.
	AS White-faced Heron		