

DPIs	SET: Nature	Judge(s): Murry Cave	
Name	Title	Result	Feedback
<b>B Grade Open</b>	<b>BO</b>		
	BO Going towards the Light	A	These are very difficult conditions to photograph and its been handled quite well. Inevitably, a slow shutter speed and high ISO have had an impact but a good effort.
<b>B Grade Set Subject</b>	<b>BS</b>		
	BS Hmm that tastes good	HC	Incredibly sharp where it counts. Use of shallow depth of field has worked well in this instance but a crop off the base (would help) to draw interest into the subject which is impressive. The title used is not what would be accepted for nature and In A grade I'd often not accept on that basis but a lovely image.
	BS Now where is it	H	As for the prior image - the same issues re naming apply, but this is stunning. Sharp and good colour and well cropped.
	BS Ancient Elephant	A	This shot of the elephant has been handled well although a slight tweak would make the image pop some more. The subject is clearly in a caged environment which for a A grade author or in a salon setting would make it ineligible
	BS Autum Rush.	M	A good use of creative zoom has helped focus the attention on the autumn colours and gives a sense of movement. Its good to see someone doing something different in a nature category.
	BS Dinner time	A	This image has a lot of potential. I'm partial to gulls as they make a great subject. The large black background has resulted in the subject matter getting lost and the heavy frame dominates the image. Its somewhat soft and a bit over exposed.
	BS Grey Heron	M	The white faced heron is a good nature subject but in this instance, the composition has let you down. The heron competes with the rock, and the heron is walking out of frame. More room on the right would have provided better balance to the image.
	BS Kereru on Kowhai	M	You've caught the kereru in the open and on one of its favourite foods. The depth of focus is great and helps the eye remain on the subject. Think about giving the bird (room) to move on the right. The human brain is programmed to think of animals moving in the direction they are facing, a predator, prey thing I think.
	BS Monarch Caterpillar	M	Nicely seen shot of this monarch. The colours are good and there's good detail. The white wall in the background stands out somewhat and detracts from the overall feel of the image. A different depth of focus (depth of field) would allow the viewer to concentrate on the subject more. Very slightly soft
	BS Monarch on Morinda Spruce	m	This is a nicely seen view of this Monarch camouflaging itself against the cones. It's a bit overexposed which is a shame and I'd suggest cropping in from the left, and the butterfly gets a bit lost in the foliage.
	BS One Legged Magpie	m	This is a well handled view of this magpie, the colours are spot on and its nice and sharp. Good depth of focus shown and the one legged posture adds interest. Really the only thing that's let you down compositionally is that it would have been nice to have seen the Magpie either sideways or more full on to the viewer. With it facing away it lends itself to being a bit disengaged with the viewer but a nice shot all the same. well done.
	BS Pied Stilt	A	A characteristic pose for this stilt foraging for a morsel. Think about the orientation of the shot. The ripples at the back run from top right to left and that creates a sense of imbalance so rotating the image so that those are horizontal would aid the composition. Rather soft all around so I suspect its been cropped in a bit too much as diffraction is coming into play.
	BS Planking Frog	A	Good on you for seeing and capturing this Bell Frog. Shame its on a plank rather than in a wild habitat but its been well caught. The eye is reasonably sharp without being perfect (2a too slow shutter speed) but the depth of focus is fairly narrow, perhaps moving a little to the right would have had you side on to the frog and thus more in focus. The back part of the frog is rather dark so you can't really see the magnificent colours these frogs have on display
	BS Shag at Kaikoura	HC	This is a very well handled shot of this young Little Shag and the composition you've caught with the shag seemingly staring at the seaweed on the rock to the left anchors the composition. Good colour and exposure overall. Perhaps a crop in to remove the distracting detail in the background would aid the composition.
	BS Spur Winged Plover	H	Well caught shot of this Masked Lapwing (formerly known as the Spur Winged Plover) The cowl around the eye is just right and the colours are good. Good depth of focus and the background is blurred out nicely. The Lapwing is sitting on the thirds and has plenty of room to look out to the right so a pleasing composition. Well done.
	BS The Eye of the Elephant	A	A good attempt at a close up of this elephant and its nice and sharp where it counts. Perhaps if you'd moved a bit to the left eye would have seen more of the eye as at present it's a bit lost. Moving to the left would also remove the obvious post in the background and you wouldn't then know it was in a
	BS White Swans	A	These swans are nicely framed but it's a bit of a shame that they are quite soft and over exposed. A bit too tightly framed.
<b>A Grade Open</b>	<b>AO</b>		
	AO Flower of the Giant Hosta 'Empress Wu'	A	I love the colour of this Hosta, It would have been nice to have seen the full petals at bottom though. Colour is good and its sharp enough. Think about your backgrounds as the flower on the right is distracting.
	AO London Eyes	H	I loved this image, there's a bit of lens flare and some of the rays of light in the middle left do not line up well with the flares from the sun on the right and may be artifacts of the processing. But the overall drama of the image is accentuated by the high structure mono treatment. Its a very clean image, by which I mean that no key elements have been cut off by the frame and theres good balance between all the completing elements. A nicely thought through and well seen composition
<b>A Grade Set Subject</b>	<b>AS</b>		
	AS Asian myna .The evil eye	NA	Mynas are one of those birds where it's hard to get a good composition, in this case there is a large branch in the background that is distracting, perhaps moving to the left (don't fall over a cliff though) may have helped. The colour and exposure looks good but there are very obvious rims around the birds indicating over-sharpening. The feathers are all smeared out as a result and while the eye (because of the highlights) and beak appears sharp at first look, the beak on both birds is pixelated and the eyes are not sharp.
	AS Asian paper wasps guarding nest	A	It takes some courage to get up close to any wasp so well caught although the sealed ones are a bit burnt out. Brownie points for that. The individual cells of the nest have been (?). The action is good as is the colour but there appears to have been a very narrow depth of field used and overall definition of the wasps has been lost. Its likely to be a moment in time but think about the edge of the frame as the wasp on bottom right could have been removed by moving a little to the left
	AS Bee My Blossom	A	The bee has been caught in mid flight and the be seems to hover without the aid of wings. You can see the pollen on the legs but unfortunately its not quite sharp enough. More importantly, if you're being serious about nature photography, one of the general rules (refer to the PSNZ or NPSNZ guidelines) is that "cute" titles are inappropriate and would result in immediate rejection at Natex for example.

	AS Centre of Attention	NA	This is an attractive image that could do well in an open competition. In this instance not enough information has been presented to inform the viewer of what type of flower it is and that's essential in a nature competition. The lighting is lovely and the composition good as well although this is one case where a central composition would suit whereas the space between the petals and the flower is different on the left and right frames.
	AS Crown Shy	HC	This is a highly creative view of these trees and the outline of the crowns against the sky has created an amazing dendritic pattern. This shot is different and could have easily resulted in something less abstract and less pleasing. I'd like to see a set following the theme. It could be a story worthy of an PSNZ A honours set so go out and explore.
	AS Dadchick with Young	M	The dabchick is one of my favourite subjects and you've done well here. The piggybacking chick adds to the story. The exposure is good and the colours are spot on. I would have liked to have seen a little more sharpness.
	AS Envious Red bill gulls, of White faced heron's catch	NA	There's a good story here not necessarily helped by the convoluted title. The White Faced Heron is sharp but there's some blowout and an overall loss of detail which suggests that this image was originally smaller in the frame and has been heavily cropped resulting in diffraction.
	AS Hosting Swan Plant	M	Nice and sharp and well exposed although the Monarch gets a bit lost in the foliage. Consider whether cropping off the base to make it landscape format would enhance your composition. The Monarch caterpillar is the subject so it would be good to have that referenced in the title.
	AS Kea	NA	This kea is pretty sharp around the eye and beak and the feathers around the head are full of detail. Sharpness drops off somewhat suggesting a too shallow depth of focus. Remember the edge of your frame especially on the left. Those leaves do not add to the story and the pose of the Kea is not fully engaging. You may be wondering why I haven't accepted the image? Well, I think that if you rotated the image to the left, the leaves disappear and the Kea's pose becomes far more engaging. So by not accepting, it gives you the chance to go back and fix. It may mean the difference between a merit and an honours.
	AS Lion	M	This lion on the prowl has been well caught and the exposure is pretty good. The head is all well in focus and I like the way the Lion is blending in with its environment. I'm thinking dry season in the Okavango. Nicely seen.
	AS Magnolia in bloom	NA	A general presumption about nature photography is that it does not include domesticated plants or animals or caged animals. The separation of the flower from the background has been well handled but the flower is not sharp and all detail has been lost. Don't get me wrong, I actually quite like this and it would sit in a creative set subject very well.
	AS Male Cicada	NA	A lot of potential here and the colour is spot on but its not sharp and the colour noise is rather overwhelming. Too tightly cropped and the vignette is too dominant.
	AS Male shoveler in flight	H	This is great. Very well caught. Shoveler ducks are pretty fast and the camera handling has been spot on. Some colour noise but I don't mind. An image to be proud of.
	AS Motherhood	A	Nicely seen view of this Mallard duck and chick but its let down by being rather soft overall. At A grade, I would normally expect to see a more appropriate title including referencing the birds name.
	AS N. Z. Dotterel	M	The NZ Dotterel is a nice subject to photograph and they tend to be hard to do well. They are quite small and its easy to have the breast burnt out so its been well handled. Think a bit about your composition as you have a lot of space on the left that doesn't add to the image and could be cropped out.
	AS Oystercatcher and chick	NA	There's good balance in this image of this Pied Oystercatcher and chick although its not very sharp. More importantly the hunched over pose for both birds is quite characteristic of a response to a threat. This is always emphasised when there's a chick involved but what it means is that you were probably too close.
	AS Petroica Longipes, (North Island Robin)	H	This is lovely and very sharp where it matters with a nicely muted background. Consider whether or not a crop of the right hand side and a slight reduction in exposure would tweak the image a bit.
	AS Proud Oyster Catcher	M	You've caught a characteristic pose for this Variable Oystercatcher. Its nice and sharp and its well exposed which can be a hard feat with these birds as the black plumage can fight against the light background. Think about your composition, in this case, (it's) rather central and would suit a crop from the left.
	AS Reflective Swan.	H	A simple image that's really sharp and it tells a nice story. The swan knows you're there but is unconcerned resulting in good engagement. Love the dribbling water. It really helps make the story.
	AS Seal basking on the beach	NA	Seals make great subjects but patience is rewarded. For wildlife, the diffuse light that a layer of cloud provides allows you to even out the tones whereas in harsh sunlight the seal gets lost among the rocks and this one is sound asleep with not much happening. At A grade there is an expectation that you could achieve a bit more than is the case here.
	AS Seal scratching on rocks	A	A characteristic pose for this NZ Fur Seal, looking back over its head at the photographer. Quite sharp and good colour around the head though the light on the right is well over exposed. The eye is always drawn to the brightest spots and in this case that's the sea and rock at top right. I suspect you would have had time to move around and get a better composition of this subject.
	AS Shag drying its feathers	M	The Little Shag is one of the more flighty shags in NZ and this one has been cught nice and sharp with good colour. I feel the composition would benefit if the shag wasn't so central.
	AS Takaka Tui	HC	I like the framing for this Tui with its characteristic pose. Its sharp and well exposed and the image has balance. Nicely done.
	AS Thanks	NA	There's a cuteness factor to this bird which I'm guessing is a Chaffinch. I'm not sure what's happened here but the detail has been lost and the colours are oversaturated. I'm guessing that the image was captured using digital (as opposed to optical) zoom. That can result in such loss of detail. At A grade I'd expect a more appropriate title and the inclusion of the birds name. I don't object to the fact its on a table as it is there of its own volition albeit tempted by a morsel.
	AS Trio of Zebra	HC	I love the mono treatment of this shot. So suited to the subject. Good separation of the three heads really adds to the composition. Nice and sharp. Slightly too tight a crop perhaps but I don't mind.
	AS White-Faced Heron	M	The White Faced Heron is a favourite subject of mine and I've spent days watching them. You've caught the character of the bird well showing an aggressive pose. Slightly underexposed. I'm not sure about the hard crop top and bottom or perhaps crop out the neck a bit.
	AS Yellow-eyed Penguin	HC	Great shot of this Yellow-eyed penguin. Nice to see a bit of action with the water splash as the penguin heads to sea. Exposure, colour, depth of focus all handled well. Think about your composition. It's pretty central and a bit more space of the right and a crop on the left could aid your composition.