

Saturday 22 May 2021

Amateur Photographer



Canon EOS M50 II
Canon's excellent **baby mirrorless**
camera gets a welcome update

UK TRAVEL SPECIAL

Passionate about photography since 1884

Off the beaten track

50 less-visited
landscape
locations
to shoot this summer



Beside the sea

Why the great British seaside
is a photographer's paradise

Moody mono

How **Edd Allen** adds
drama and atmosphere
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It is a frequently repeated cliché that at some locations visiting landscape photographers merely need to insert their tripod legs into the holes worn into the ground by previous photographers in order to secure the perfect shot. Of course we all enjoy seeing beautifully lit and executed images of our favourite honeypot locations but this week's big feature is not about those places which, with

foreign holidays off the agenda for most of us, are likely to be busier than ever this year. Instead we present 50 alternative, less-photographed locations as suggested by our leading landscape shooters. Perhaps our interview with Edd Allen will inspire you to capture some of them in black & white. Meanwhile Britain's seaside resorts look set for a busy summer this year, which is great news for street and social documentary photographers, as Peter Dench reports. **Nigel Atherton, Editor**

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SOMETHING TO SAY? Write to us at ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk with your letters, opinion columns (max 500 words) or article suggestions.

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This week's cover image

Our cover image, by Edd Allen, was taken at West Wittering, in West Sussex. Read our interview with Edd on page 34

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This week in 1951

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TREASURES FROM THE HULTON ARCHIVE



Royal Festival visit by William Vanderson/Fox Photos

Their Royal Highnesses the Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh arrive at the South Bank exhibition site, London, for their official visit to the Festival of Britain, which was opened on 3 May 1951 by King George VI. The Festival was conceived by Labour cabinet minister Herbert Morrison as a 'tonic for the nation' to raise the spirits of a country still

gripped by rationing. Timed to coincide with the centenary of the Great Exhibition of 1851 and occupying a 27-acre site on the South Bank, it was a showcase for British manufacturing and design which attracted eight million visitors and was regarded as a triumph that shaped British culture for a generation. See AP's report on the Festival of Britain on page 12.

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It's good to share

Our favourite photos posted by readers on our social media channels this week

AP picture of the week

Delicate Beauties by Henrik Spranz

Canon EOS 5D Mark IV, Sigma 180mm f/2.8, 1/100sec at f/3.2, ISO 100

'Liverleaves are early bloomers, and every year I look forward to taking photos of these heralds of spring,' says Henrik, a software developer and former winner of our Amateur Photographer of the Year competition.

'I took this photo in a forest near Vienna. I used a bean bag to achieve a very low point of view, used a wide open aperture on my long macro lens for a nice bokeh, and used a little artificial light for some glamour. There has been no retouching or altering elements in post processing.' Henrik is on Instagram as @henrik_spranz.

#appicoftheweek

Win!

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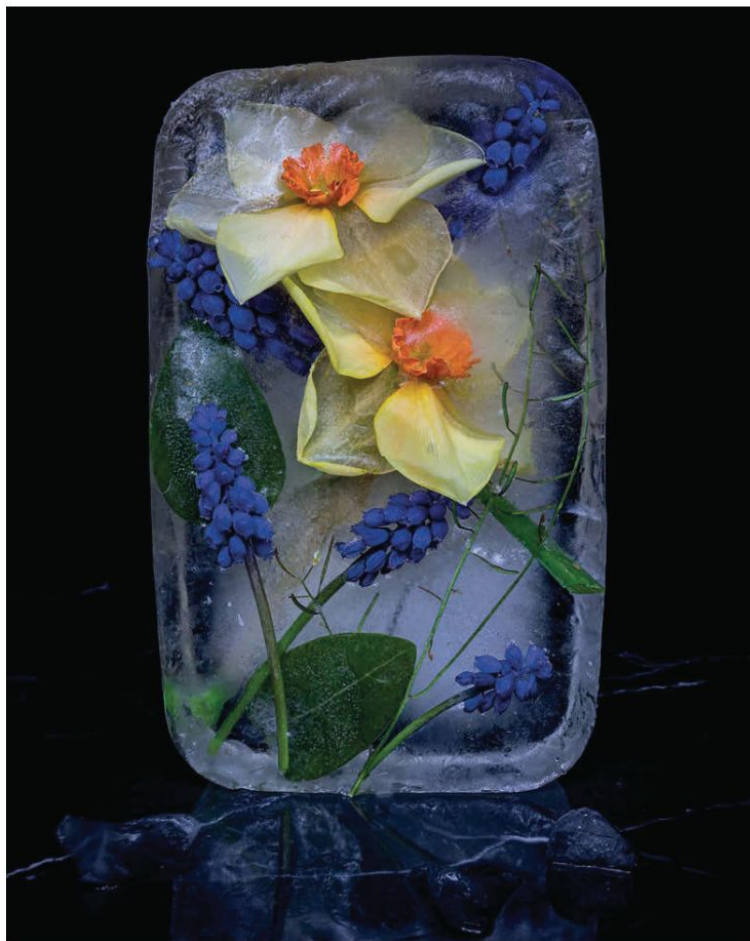






It's good
to share

We also liked...



Confine by Steve Rabone

Canon EOS 6D Mark II, Sigma 35mm Art,
10secs at f/16, ISO 100

'Alongside my full-time non-photographic job, I'm currently studying online for an MA in Photography with Falmouth University,' says Steve. 'Following the third lockdown, with my normal opportunities to photograph people and nature severely restricted, I wanted to explore still-life photography. This is part of a project called Moments of Still and is a

visual representation of being trapped, using wild spring flowers frozen in ice to achieve this. The challenge with this type of image is that you have to visualise the composition before you freeze the flowers, as once frozen there is no going back. The actual photograph was shot on a long exposure in the dark, with the light painted into the scene via a small pocket torch. This technique is called light sculpturing and achieves an even light with lots of detail due to the small aperture.' Instagram: @steverabone.





You Say You Want a Revolution by Tony Pantelis

Nikon D750, Sigma 24-105mm f/4 Art, 1/100sec at f/8, ISO 100, fill-in flash

'I'm retired now, but worked for more years than I care to remember in photographic service departments for various importers,' Tony tells us. 'This idea came from The Beatles song, *Revolution*. I like taking inspiration from titles or lines from songs and creating an image around it, and this is my third attempt at this song. I also enjoy rummaging around charity and fancy dress shops for props, as I now specialise in portrait photography for club and online competitions. The model in this image is Vonny Lang (@vonnnylang) and it was compiled and processed using Photoshop CC.' @artemis_fotografie.

Kingfisher by Mark Stacey

Nikon D7500, Sigma 150-600mm f/5-6.3, 1/1000sec at f/6.3, ISO 1600

'I spotted this kingfisher on a walk through a village near where I work,' says Mark, who confesses to a huge passion for wildlife and nature. 'The walk takes you past a little brook behind some houses and a church, and lo and behold there was this kingfisher just perched above the water. I always carry my camera with me everywhere and so creeping up behind a tree (out of its sight) I dialled in the settings and, praying it was still there, poked out from behind the tree. And it was. I'd been everywhere to see a kingfisher, spent hours in hides and nothing, and here one was right in front of me – a stone's throw from where I work! It was an incredible moment that I will never forget.' Instagram @MarkStaceyPhotography.



Tracks by Andy Alcock


Canon EOS R, EF24-70mm f/2.8L, 1/60sec at f/7.1, ISO 100

'This particular scene is from a last-minute walk I did locally,' recalls Andy, who has been a keen photographer for two years. 'I saw the dark storm-clouds forming and the burst of light coming through, so picked up my camera and headed out to get a shot with the right composition that complemented the clouds.' Instagram: @alshot_images.






Ultra-fast Laowa Argus 33mm f/0.95 CF APO

 CHINESE lens maker Venus Optics has introduced the first in a new lineup of ultra-fast f/0.95 optics. The Laowa Argus 33mm f/0.95 CF APO for APS-C mirrorless cameras promises to give minimal chromatic aberration and will cost £499. As with most of the firm's lenses, it employs entirely manual operation with no electronics.

The lens accepts 62mm filters and is supplied with a rectangular hood. It'll be available in Canon RF, Fujifilm X, Nikon Z and Sony E mounts.



Leica offers 'affordable' 24-70mm f/2.8

 LEICA has announced its most affordable full-frame L-mount lens to date, with the Vario-Elmarit-SL 1:2.8/24-70mm Asph set to cost £2,300. It will also be sold in kits with the firm's SL2 and SL2-S full-frame mirrorless bodies.

At 123mm in length and 88mm in diameter, and weighing 856g, it's rather smaller than the firm's existing 24-90mm f/2.8-4 optic, and much less expensive. However, it still costs more than twice as much as Sigma's 24-70mm F2.8 DG DN Art, which is practically identical in terms of physical design and specifications.

Holder for digitising film smashes sales targets

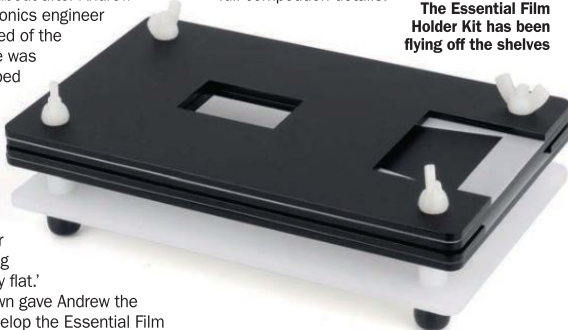
 THE ESSENTIAL Film Holder Kit, which won our Gold award when we tested it last August, is about to reach its 10,000 sales milestone. Described by AP's Andy Westlake as 'an elegant and affordable holder for digitising film', the kit costs £90.

The idea came about after Andrew Clifford, an electronics engineer by background, tired of the variable results he was getting with a flatbed scanner. 'Also, a Negative Supply film carrier would have cost about £1,400, which I thought was somewhat high for the task of keeping negatives perfectly flat.'

The first lockdown gave Andrew the opportunity to develop the Essential Film

Holder. 'When it came out in March 2020, I said I'd be happy to sell 50 units!' he adds. Now on version 3, the Essential Film Holder supports 35mm and 120 film and keeps your negatives perfectly flat. We have several units to give away, so see bit.ly/efhcompetition for full competition details.

The Essential Film Holder Kit has been flying off the shelves



Cokin launches high-end 100mm filter holder

 COKIN is synonymous with square filters, but the firm has seen its star wane in recent years with the rise of brands such as LEE. Now it's seeking to take a chunk of the high-end market with its new premium NX-Series 100mm filter holder. Designed primarily for landscape photographers, it promises no vignetting with 16-35mm wideangle zooms, even when the holder is positioned at an angle.

Key updates compared to the firm's current EVO holder include a rear-mounted polariser that can be operated using a wheel on the side, and a foam gasket on the holder to prevent light leakage during long exposures. Aluminium frames are employed to protect fragile neutral density (ND) and ND graduated filters from handling marks and accidental drops.

Cokin says the NX-Series filter holder is compact and lightweight, being constructed from aluminium alloy. It employs the same lens rings as the firm's existing Z-series holder, which are available in sizes up to 82mm. The system is compatible not just with the firm's own Nuanes Extreme mineral glass filters, but in principle with any 2mm-thick 100x100mm and 100x150mm filters from other brands.

Due to be available from late May, the NX-Series filter holder will cost £99.99. But you'll need to add a matched polariser, which costs £79.99, along with frames for all your filters at £17.99 each. Various kits will be available. For full details, see nx-series.com.



Cokin's NX-Series filter holder is aimed at landscape shooters



Rated 'Excellent'

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Viewpoint Jon Bentley

Chinese firms are making impressive moves in many areas of the photo market, so could they soon shake up the camera industry?

Could some of the world's leading camera brands soon be Chinese? I can remember back in 2012 contributing to a podcast about the future of gadgets and my fellow participants thinking I was a trifle eccentric when I suggested that many of the leading smartphone makers would soon stem from China. I don't wish to blow my own trumpet but I think time has proved me right on this one. Oppo, OnePlus, Realme and Xaomi, to name but four Chinese brands, now sell cutting-edge phone tech.

Of course the camera industry is no stranger to global shifts. In the middle of the 20th century it was concentrated in Europe, and particularly Germany, as serious photographers favoured tools from firms like Rollei, Zeiss and Leica. Two of today's heavyweights, Canon and Nikon, started out making cameras that were heavily inspired by these classics. But soon the Japanese moved beyond mere emulation to create distinctive designs and dominate new market categories like the single lens reflex, and lead the world's camera industry.

Is a camera revolution about to happen all over again, centred in China? Quite possibly. Many well-known Japanese brands are already made there, and not just compacts and cheaper bodies and lenses. Fujifilm's X-T4 and Panasonic's Lumix GH5 are two relatively upmarket examples.

Naturally these products still bear the established Japanese monikers, but China is already making its presence felt with its own brands in many areas of the photographic market. Odd and innovative lenses are a niche example. We often use a Laowa probe lens on *The Gadget Show* to take close-ups of devices. The Hefei, Anhui-based company's ultra-wide and other primes are pretty good too.

Akaso is just one of many Chinese action camera brands. It may not quite



A Laowa lens in use on *The Gadget Show*

yet equal the likes of GoPro but it's good enough to show potential and offer choice to value-conscious consumers. Then there's drones. Shenzhen-based DJI (or Da-Jiang Innovations) dominates the global market in sales and technology.

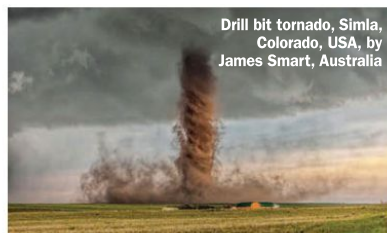
Any of these companies could potentially extend their reach and lend their names to serious stills cameras. As might those smartphone companies, using the photographic expertise learned making handsets. Xaomi already sells action cameras, for example. China's photographic accessory makers could also diversify. I've been impressed how filters and tripods from the likes of K&F Concept offer credible alternatives to the full price established brands. Maybe they'll consider embracing cameras too.

Or how about this? Perhaps that most venerable and well known of Chinese marques, Holga, could go drastically upmarket. Instead of fun lo-fi roll film cameras it might undergo a Skoda-style renaissance and develop a megapixel-packed mirrorless body, boasting state-of-the-art AI and dream-like ergonomics, and just undercutting the leading players on price. I wouldn't bet on it, but stranger things have happened.

Jon Bentley is a TV producer and presenter best known for *Top Gear* and Channel 5's *The Gadget Show*

Books & exhibitions

The latest and best books and exhibitions from the world of photography



Drill bit tornado, Simla, Colorado, USA, by James Smart, Australia

Travel Photographer of the Year Exhibition

12 May to 10 June 2021, Coal Drops Yard, near King's Cross Station, London, Free

The winning images from the 2020 Travel Photographer of the Year Awards will be on display in an open-air exhibition close to both King's Cross and St Pancras Stations in London. At a time when international travel is uncertain, a visit to see the stunning winning shots from the competition might help to satisfy the urge to explore further.

Naturally, Covid had an impact on the contest. Some entrants submitted images taken close to home during lockdown; others photographed countries in which they had unexpectedly found themselves in as temporary residents. We see majestic landscapes, intimate animal and bird portraits, and intriguing night-time views. We also see travel reportage, such as a view of life under siege in Syria, as well as cultures from across the globe.

The exhibition is outdoors and therefore both Covid-secure and viewable 24 hours a day.

The Guide by John Myers

£35, RRB Photobooks, softcover, 116 pages, ISBN: 9781916057579



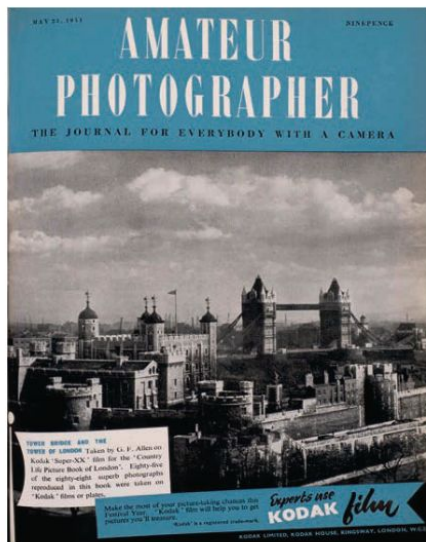
Combining some of the best-loved photographs taken during John Myers' career alongside his wry prose on the method and theory of his work, *The Guide* should appeal to fans of black & white, documentary and archival work.

The photographs in the book come from his series including *The Portraits*, *Looking at the Overlooked* and *The End of Industry*, along with previously unpublished works. Most of the images were taken within walking distance of Myers' home in Stourbridge, West Midlands, on his 5x4 Gandolfi plate camera between 1972 and 1988. Inspired by the work of August Sander, Diane Arbus, Eugène Atget and Walker Evans, he shot relatively few negatives during that time. The images study the mundane, the everyday, which at the time are often dismissed but later come to have more meaning.

Do you have something you'd like to get off your chest? Send us your thoughts in around 500 words to the email address on page 3 and win a year's digital subscription to AP.

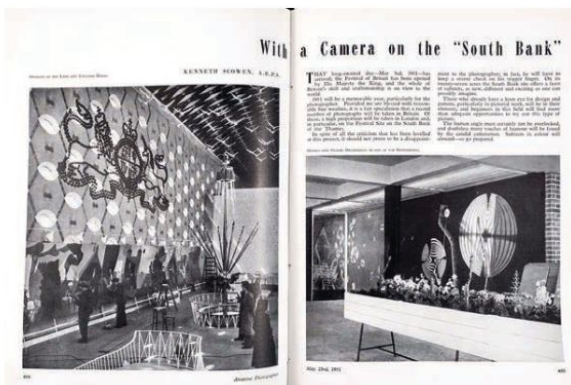
From the archive

Nigel Atherton looks back at past AP issues



23 May 1951

THE VIEW of London that graced the cover 70 years ago this week signposted AP's report of the opening of the biggest event held in the UK since the war, and not equalled to this day in its scope, ambition and influence. 'That long-awaited day – May 3rd 1951 – has arrived; the Festival of Britain has been opened by His Majesty the King, and the whole of Britain's skill and craftsmanship is on view to the world,' wrote the report. It continued: 'In spite of all the criticism that has been levelled at this project it should not prove to be a disappointment to the photographer. In fact, he will have to keep a severe check on his trigger finger. On its 27 acres the South Bank site offers a feast of subjects, as new, different and exciting as one can possibly imagine.' The enthusiastic report was accompanied by a selection of photographs of some of the interior and exterior visual highlights. Speaking of British craftsmanship the issue also featured a report on the arrival, finally, of the long-awaited and much-delayed Reid camera. 'The Reid, as we think most interested readers are aware, is, quite frankly, a reproduction of the Leica IIIb, the latest pre-war model.' Although criticised for not being an original design, 'we think it only fair to make clear that its production was undertaken at the direct request of the responsible authorities. Messrs. Reid & Sigrist, who up to now have been unknown in photographic circles, are a firm of precision engineers...[whose] aircraft instruments, to take but one example, are world renowned.'

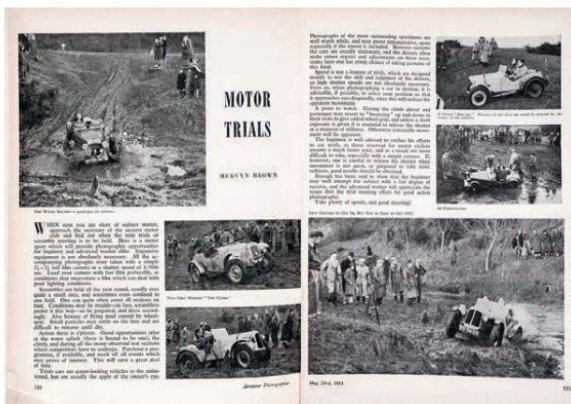


What to photograph at the just-opened Festival of Britain, on London's South Bank



Festival attractions on the South Bank

The Reid, a British-made Leica IIIb copy



A feature on motor trials advised readers to set their shutter speeds to 1/50th sec



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Best photo location

With travel abroad looking uncertain this year, **Tracy Calder** teams up with landscape pros to compile a new bucket list of great locations in Britain that avoids the obvious honeypots and camera-wielding crowds

Scotland



Mingary Castle, Ardnamurchan, Scotland

Built in the early 14th century and a ruin for many years, this castle is now a luxury hotel. However, don't let this put you off. Its coastal location with a mountainous backdrop is stunning and for wildlife lovers, otters can often be seen on the shoreline below the castle. Mingary is just a few miles from the spectacularly located Ardnamurchan Lighthouse, an ideal spot for wildlife watchers and photographers alike. **Jeremy Walker, www.jeremywalker.co.uk**

Ruabhal, Benbecula, Outer Hebrides

Guidebooks are seriously dismissive of Benbecula. The 2002 edition of *The Rough Guide to Scottish Highlands and Islands* describes it as 'pancake flat' before suggesting that you drive across it and head straight for North Uist. However, if you take the trouble to walk up Ruabhal (the highest point on the island at 124m) you will be rewarded with breathtaking views of Benbecula's waterlogged interior.



Eilean Bàn (White Island)

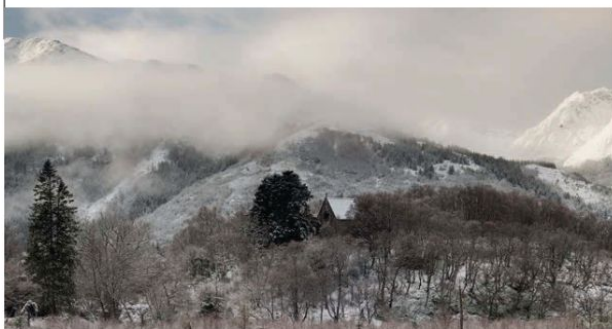
This six-acre island (situated between the Isle of Skye and mainland Scotland) is a haven for wildlife with otters, seals, cormorants, shags and herons regularly sighted from its shoreline. Eilean Bàn is the former home of author Gavin Maxwell and, as such, there is a museum dedicated to him close to the water's edge. The island supports one of the struts of Skye Bridge and has its own lighthouse, offering plenty of opportunities for wildlife, landscape and architecture images.

Isle of Muck, Small Isles

Despite boasting white sandy beaches, secluded bays and visits from eagles, whales, porpoises and puffins, this low-lying island on the west coast of Scotland is often overlooked by visitors to the Small Isles. Beinn Airein is the highest point on the island (452ft above sea level) and is an easy climb for a wonderful 360° panoramic view of the surrounding islands.

Callert Mausoleum, Loch Leven

Turning right off the main Glencoe to Fort William road at North Ballachulish, the B863 winds and snakes along the shores of Loch Leven. After a mile and a half or so, hidden in the woods is a ruined mausoleum, a forest track and room for parking opposite. The mausoleum is well worth a visit but for a spectacular view of the mountains of Glencoe and Appin follow the forest track for just a few hundred metres. **Jeremy Walker, www.jeremywalker.co.uk**



So off the beaten track

North West England

© PETER RIMINGTON/GETTY IMAGES

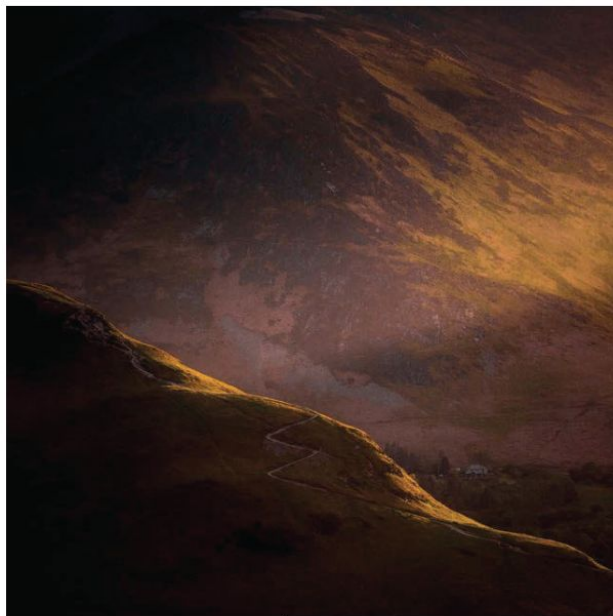


Lytham Windmill, Lytham St Annes, Lancashire

Windmills punctuated the landscape of Lytham for hundreds of years, but being on the large side this particularly fine example served a wider area than most. In 1919 a severe gale caused the sails of the mill to run out of control causing the brake to spark and, ultimately, burning down the entire building. Over the years the mill has been returned to its former glory and is now a handsome (and photogenic) sight on Lytham Green.

Hest Bank Beach, Lancashire

The grassy foreshore and smooth stretches of sand on this unassuming beach are more popular with oystercatchers, curlews, dunlin and black-tailed godwits than tourists. There are great views over the saltmarshes and mudflats of Morecambe Bay, with the fells of the Lake District visible in the distance, although it's important to note that there are dangerous channels and quicksand here, so the mudflats and saltmarshes should not be visited without an experienced guide.



TURNBULL & SIMONS ©

New Brighton Lighthouse, Wirral

Modelled after the trunk of an oak tree, New Brighton Lighthouse stands 95ft tall. There's no denying it's a popular landmark in The Wirral but if you set your camera up at sunrise or sunset there's a pretty good chance that you'll have the beach to yourself. As the tide retreats, pools of water form at the base of the lighthouse offering fresh photo opportunities, but the sea comes in quickly so make sure you are familiar with the tide times.

Walla Crag, Lake District

This accessible (379m) fell commands an excellent position for photographing Derwentwater, the Borrowdale Valley and the more-often-climbed fells beyond. It is a fabulous location for panoramic images both at sunrise and sunset, particularly with the abundance of heather on its summit from late August to mid-September. The summit of Walla Crag can be reached in less than an hour and there are plenty of photography options on the ascent with rich woodlands and babbling brooks. **Simon Turnbull, www.simonturnbullphotography.com**

Castlehead, Keswick, Lake District

Just a short stroll out of Keswick sits the small (162m) but fabulously positioned hill of Castlehead. It's a fairly steep but short walk to the top through rich woodland. At the summit you're rewarded with splendid views across Derwentwater towards Catbells and the Borrowdale Valley or the imposing fell of Skiddaw behind Keswick. It's also worth keeping an eye out for cloud inversions in the valley which the top often pokes out of.

Simon Turnbull, www.simonturnbullphotography.com

TURNBULL & SIMONS ©



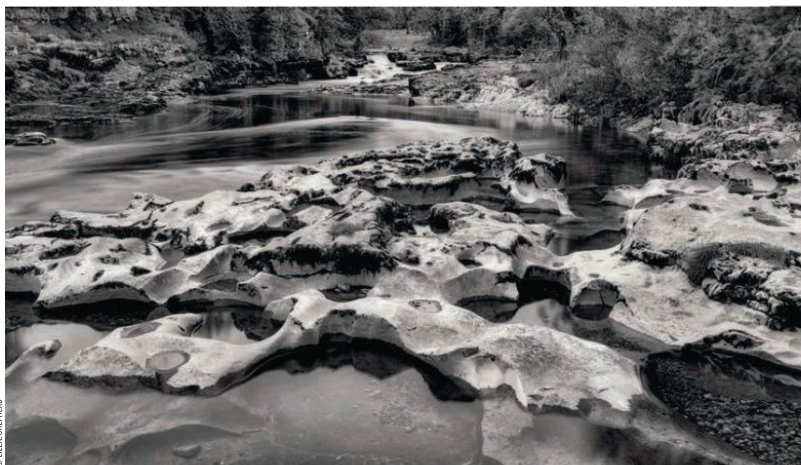
Yorkshire

Todd's Wood, Cray

Todd's Wood sits just below the grassy, limestone scar below Slades, and just to the west of the tiny hamlet of Cray, at the tip of Upper Wharfedale. There is no public access to the wood itself but the bird's-eye views from above, near Crook Gill, are wonderful. The woodland is predominantly ash – hugely characterful trees – and one has to hope they survive the worst of Ash dieback disease.

Lizzie Shepherd, www.lizzieshepherd.com

© LIZZIE SHEPHERD



© LIZZIE SHEPHERD

Ghaistrill's Strid, Grassington

A fascinating alternative to the Strid in Lower Wharfedale, Ghaistrill's Strid is a smaller and charming photographic gem, further up the Wharfe, where a narrowing of the river forces the water through some beautifully sculpted limestone channels. It's a great area for more-detailed, intimate landscapes but also offers scope for wider shots of the tree-lined river.

Lizzie Shepherd, www.lizzieshepherd.com

River Esk

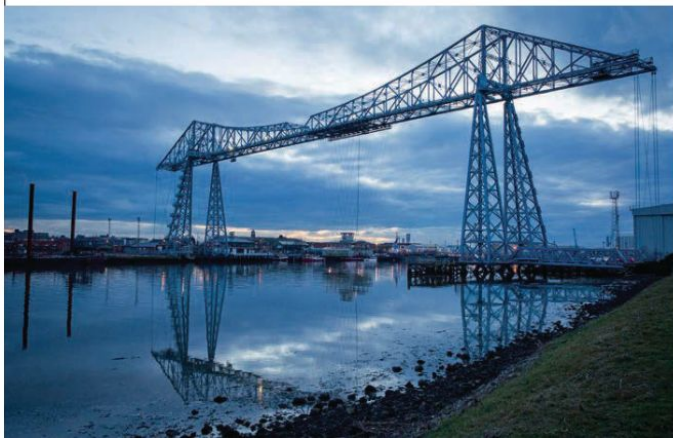
Nearly 30 miles in length, this river runs through the Eskdale Valley before finally emptying into the North Sea at Whitby, which is where many holidaymakers spend their days. There are several notable bridges along its course – Beggar's Bridge at Glaisdale, for example, is particularly fine – but it's the lesser-known bends, streams and tree-lined banks that will provide truly unique pictures.

Dry-stone walls, Littondale

Dotted with traditional 17th-century farmhouses, dry-stone walls and sheep, the valley of Littondale is rich in history and full of picture potential. While there are countless popular landmarks nearby (the valley boasts Pen-y-Ghent, one of the Yorkshire Three Peaks, for example), a closer look at the dry-stone walls will reward macro photographers greatly. Here you will find a delightful microclimate of lichens, liverworts and mosses, as well as many insects and spiders.

Tees Transporter Bridge, Middlesbrough

Yorkshire might be well known for its glorious natural landscape, but there's a unique beauty to the transporter bridge that spans the River Tees. Built in 1911, it's a symbol of Teesside's engineering and industrial heritage and is still fully functioning. The structure is repainted every seven to ten years, so if you time your visit right you may well come home with truly unique pictures!



© ANDREW JATSON/GETTY IMAGES

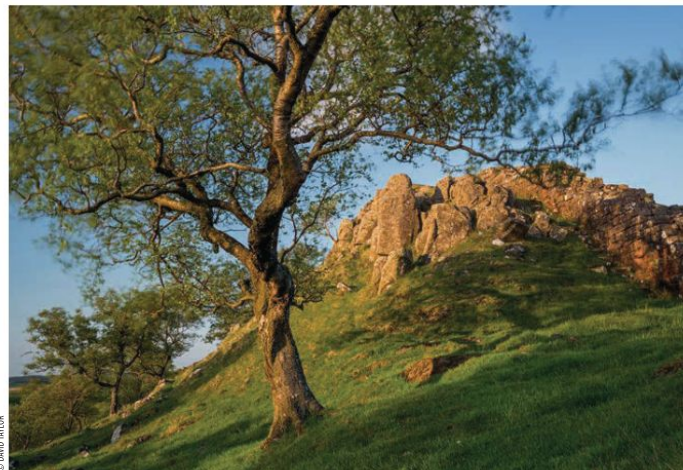
North East England



© DAVID TAYLOR

North Shore, Holy Island, Northumberland

Photographers queue up for the classic view of Lindisfarne Castle on Holy Island in Northumberland, but few of them make the short journey to the North Shore. If they did, they would find deserted beaches, an array of wildflowers, impressive sand dunes and blissful silence (apart from the haunting cry of the local seals).



Specere, Kielder, Hexham

This stark timber shelter was designed by architect David Adjaye and stands atop the 1,900ft summit of Deadwater Fell. The shelter is a welcome sight for walkers and mountain bikers as it offers excellent protection from the south-westerly winds. One side is completely open, framing the view to the south of Kielder Water & Forest Park, but the shelter itself is also wonderfully photogenic.

Jesmond Dene, Newcastle upon Tyne

This narrow, wooded valley follows the River Ouseburn (which flows through Newcastle and into the River Tyne) between South Gosforth and Jesmond Vale. Showcasing a mix of native and exotic trees, the Dene is home to kingfishers, red squirrels and countless other flora and fauna. There's more than three kilometres of picturesque landscape to explore, but the waterfall and old mill at the northern end are real highlights.

Walltown, Hadrian's Wall

There is a long stretch of Hadrian's Wall at Walltown that gracefully follows the rise and fall of the landscape. Walltown is a great year-round spot, though at its best in the summer months. At this time of the year, the dolerite rocks of Walltown Crags and the north face of Hadrian's Wall glow in the warm light of sunrise and sunset. **David Taylor, www.daviddtaylorphotography.co.uk**

Great Hetha, College Valley, Northumberland

The steep walk to the top of Great Hetha is demanding but worth it for the views across the College Valley to Cheviot. Another feature of Great Hetha is the remains of an Iron Age hill fort, the broken stone wall of which circles the summit. Harder to spot are the elusive – but photogenic – wild goats that make their home in the Cheviot Hills.

David Taylor, www.daviddtaylorphotography.co.uk



Midlands

Cottesbrooke, Northampton

The small village of Cottesbrooke, north of Northampton, is centred on the magnificent Cottesbrooke Hall and its estate. The hall gardens are open to the public and are well worth a visit, but it is the single track, gated roads through the estate that offer views of open parkland with an array of stunning mature trees, seen at their best in the early morning mist. Deer and foxes can occasionally be observed as well as birdlife along the small stream.

Jeremy Walker, www.jeremywalker.co.uk



© JEREMY WALKER

Bradgate Park, Leicestershire

Bradgate Park is 830 acres of publicly accessible parkland, north west of Leicester. Consisting of woodland containing gnarled old oaks, dramatic rocky outcrops, a hill-top folly, a deer park and the ruins of Bradgate House, once home to Lady Jane Grey, queen of England for just nine days. **Jeremy Walker**, www.jeremywalker.co.uk



© JEREMY WALKER

Moseley Bog, Birmingham

Moseley Bog was the childhood haunt of JRR Tolkien (author of *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*) and it's easy to see how he found inspiration for Middle-earth among the twisted trunks, clay pits and burnt mounds here. The bog is a valuable wildlife site and comprises wet woodland, fen, the remains of a Victorian garden, a brook and a pond. The adjacent Joy's Wood is also worth exploring.

Chee Dale, Derbyshire

The Dovedale Stepping Stones that cross the River Dove near Ashbourne attract thousands of visitors every year, but few of them are aware that Chee Dale near Buxton has its own far-less-frequented set. The stones are close to the Monsal Trail (which follows the track of a disused railway line) and hug the edge of the river as they lead walkers through a picturesque limestone gorge.

Normanton Church, Rutland

Birdwatching is one of the main pastimes at Rutland Water Nature Reserve – there are more than 30 hides, and the area is justly famous for its breeding ospreys. With woodland, wetlands and grassland to explore there is plenty to photograph, but if you lay down your spotting scope you might find that the fairy-tale splendour of Normanton Church is hard to resist.



© LORNA HARRIS/GETTY IMAGES

East of England



© THE KNOTTER

Henstead Exotic Garden, Suffolk

Described as 'Suffolk's Secret Jungle', this garden is full of character and huge, voluptuous plants! Two miles from the east coast seems like an odd place for growing exotics, but that hasn't stopped Andrew Brogan from creating his fantasy garden complete with ponds, palms and Spanish reeds.

Osea Island, Essex

Reached via a causeway (built by the Romans) covered at high water, this privately-owned island is situated in the River Blackwater, yet feels miles away from the hustle and bustle of nearby Maldon. Comprising 550 acres of gardens, orchards, meadows and salt marsh it's a good job you have to stay overnight to gain access as there are plenty of landscape photography opportunities!

© JAMES ABBOTT

Holme Fen National Nature Reserve

At 2.75m below sea level, Holme Fen is the lowest point in the UK. But that's not all, it's also home to the largest silver birch woodland in the UK. The nature reserve as a whole covers 657 acres, and while the silver birch trees are a firm favourite with landscape photographers, the location is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest – with more than 500 types of fungi as well as insects, birds and mammals to keep nature and wildlife photographers busy.

James Abbott,
www.jamesaphoto.co.uk



© JAMES ABBOTT



The Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory

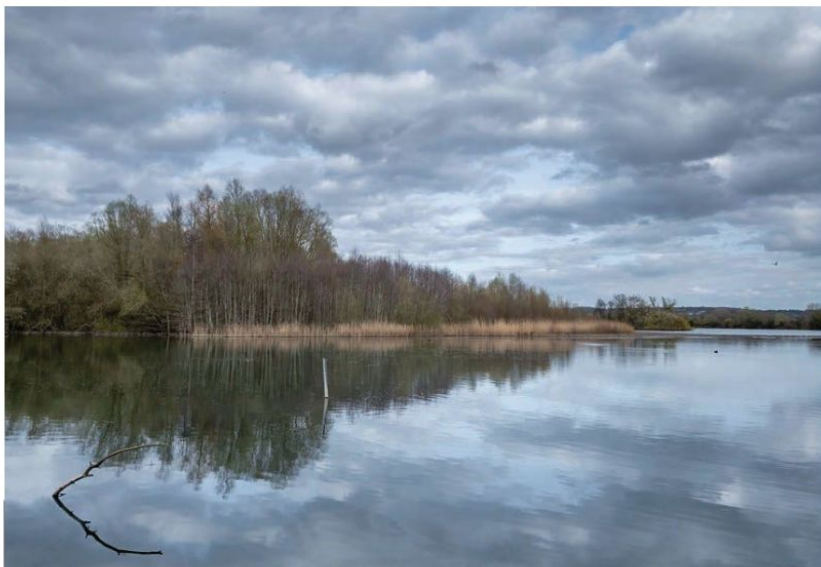
East Anglia isn't one of the most obvious locations in the UK for shooting astrophotography, but just outside of Cambridge there's The Mullard Radio Astronomy Observatory where on a clear night the telescopes provide the perfect foreground interest when shooting stars. There's a group of functioning telescopes, plus a single decommissioned telescope, that can be shot from public footpaths and access land on the Barton Road side of the grounds.

James Abbott, www.jamesaphoto.co.uk

Sizewell Beach

Sizewell Beach is perhaps best-known for the nuclear power station next to the beach. But while this dominating figure looms in the background, the view out to sea is much more inviting. Structures in the sea make great subjects for long exposures, and fishermen's huts behind the shingle beach are great as a subject in themselves. The area behind the beach is also home to water voles, otters, barn owls, marsh harriers and kingfishers, as well as orchids and fen plants. **James Abbott,** www.jamesaphoto.co.uk

South East



Spade Oak Lake, Buckinghamshire

Formally an old quarry gravel pit, this site has been transformed into a nature reserve, perfect to visit all year round due to the changing light, colours in the trees and migrating birds. Nestled between the River Thames and the M40 it's a haven for wildlife, birdlife and stunning reflections of the trees and reeds surrounding it. **Helen Trust, www.helentrustphotography.com**



Busketts Lawn Inclosure, New Forest, Hampshire

During autumn this spot is rich with fungi, deer and pigs (these acorn-loving animals are let loose during the pannage season – a practice that dates back to William the Conqueror). There are plenty of rotting tree stumps, modest streams and native plants to keep those who prefer intimate landscapes busy, but for something slightly more grand head to nearby Stagbury Hill.

Penn Wood, Buckinghamshire

This is one of the largest ancient woodlands in the heart of the Chilterns (AONB). Formerly a clay digging site and Second World War army training camp, there is a diverse array of tree varieties, now protected by the Woodland Trust, a wonderful bluebell area and avenues of rhododendrons providing refuge for a variety of wildlife, flora and fauna. **Helen Trust, www.helentrustphotography.com**



Kingley Vale National Nature Reserve, West Sussex

Home to some of the oldest living things in Britain, Kingley Vale is one of the finest yew forests in Western Europe. The twisted trees can be surprisingly tricky to photograph, but if frustration gets the better of you then step out from the darkness and train your lens on some younger flora and fauna. Green woodpeckers, red kites and buzzards are common here, while the chalk grassland supports many wildflowers.

Borthwood Copse, Isle of Wight

This rich woodland of ancient oak, beech, chestnut and hazel is a stronghold of the red squirrel. It was once part of a much larger medieval hunting forest and features many winding paths and lovely sunny glades. The wood is celebrated for its rare beetles and other insects that feast on decaying wood and is also home to dormice and woodland bats.

South West

Tremenheere Woods, Cornwall

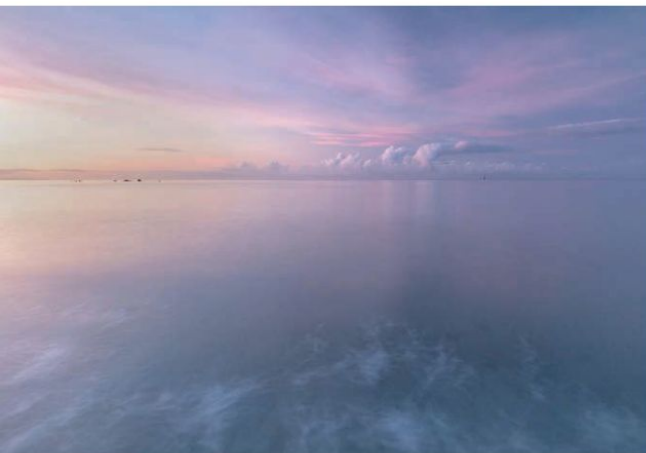
A small woodland of mature trees and shrubs with a stream running through it. There is an abundance of wildflowers including carpets of bluebells, with many wild birds and other native wildlife species to photograph. The woodland is accessed by a footpath behind Tremenheere Sculpture Gardens, near Penzance, and is part of the longer St. Michael's Way circular walk. **Lucie Averill**
www.lucieaverillphotography.co.uk

Marshwood Vale, Dorset

There's more to Marshwood Vale than the photogenic cluster of trees atop Colmer's Hill. This bowl-shaped valley lies within the Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and, as such, there are many hedgerows, copses and semi-natural woods to explore. In spring, woodland butterflies abound, while in summer wildflowers line the verges.



© LUCIE AVERILL



Long Rock, Cornwall

This sheltered, sandy beach between Marazion and Penzance offers many photo opportunities throughout the year from longer exposures at high tide (bring your wellies) to sculptural sand ripples and rock pools at low tide. Perfect for photographing reflections in the wet sand, it has views towards St Michael's Mount, is home to numerous seabirds and is dog-friendly all year. **Lucie Averill**
www.lucieaverillphotography.co.uk

Fossil Forest, Jurassic Coast, Dorset

Lulworth Cove is one of Britain's most popular beaches, and yet most visitors fail to explore the Army Ranges to the east. Records show that as many as 32 types of butterfly and 100 types of flower thrive in Lulworth, which has surely got to make the climb up from the cove worth it. If that's not tempting enough then consider the fossil forest (the remains of an ancient, submerged forest) just over the hill.

St Martin's Head, St Martin's, Isles of Scilly

Great Bay on St Martin's was once voted the best beach in the UK, but if you can tear yourself away from the white-sand and crystal-clear water then a stroll to the Day Mark at St Martin's Head is well worth it. This colourful landmark was built in 1683 and serves as a navigational aid to sailors. The tower was originally painted white, then red, before gaining its much-admired stripes.



© LUCIE AVERILL

© JIMMY COLLIER

Point of Ayr Lighthouse, Talacre beach

This grade II listed lighthouse is the oldest of its kind in Wales and guided seafarers for over 100 years before being decommissioned in 1883. The beach it stands on is popular during the summer, so save your visit for the cooler months. The dunes are a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and support a population of natterjack toads!



© HELEN WATSON/GETTY IMAGES

Wales

Usk Valley Walk, Monmouthshire

This long-distance route (from Caerleon to Brecon) follows some of the course of the River Usk and takes in some truly stunning scenery along the way. There are splendid views of the Brecon Beacon mountains, as well as medieval castles and dramatic vistas from modest peaks (by Welsh standards anyway!), but it's the quieter scenes along the river and canal that make it so magical.



© PETER BARRITT/ROBERT HARDING/GETTY IMAGES



© DAVID CALDER

Newborough Forest, Anglesey

It might be one of the most important red squirrel sites in the UK, but many people walk through this National Nature Reserve and Forest in their bid to reach the picturesque island of Ynys Llanddwyn with its lighthouse and neighbouring dunes. Spend some time among the pine trees, however, and you will soon find picture opportunities aplenty.

St Trillo's Chapel, Rhos-on-Sea

Seating six people, this characterful stone chapel is rumoured to be the smallest church in the British Isles. It's a short walk from the beach at Rhos-on-Sea (a stretch of sand that's often ignored in favour of its larger neighbour, Colwyn Bay). The building has been heavily repaired over the centuries but is still full of rustic charm.

Bosherton Lily Ponds, Stackpole, Pembrokeshire

Despite its modest size, the village of Bosherton is considered the epicentre of the Pembroke climbing scene. Every year hundreds of people use it as the jumping off point for many of the best climbing and hiking routes in Wales. However, if scaling peaks isn't your thing then you might like to consider the sedate sport of lily pad photography.

London



Street Art, Brick Lane

If you turn your back on the market stalls, food vendors and street performers that occupy the entire length of Brick Lane on a Sunday you might find that the surrounding street art provides a wonderful backdrop to London life. In the main this is not graffiti, but carefully sprayed and ever-changing art.

Jeremy Walker, www.jeremywalker.co.uk

Thames Steps, Southbank (near the Oxo Tower)

The Southbank area of London has many interesting details but one aspect that is often overlooked is that as the tide goes out, a little bit more of hidden London is revealed. You don't expect sandy beaches in central London, but here you can go down onto the sandy shore for a little careful exploration before the tide turns.

Jeremy Walker, www.jeremywalker.co.uk



© CALVIN MCNEIL/ALAMY. TAKEN WITH A SONY XEIRIS S1 PHONE

Update the bucket list

ACCORDING to a survey carried out by Sony Mobile and Lonely Planet only three out of ten Brits visit locations off the beaten track. Perhaps what's more surprising is that 10% of those polled admit to 'never travelling within the UK' (and that's without the restrictions imposed by the pandemic!)

Tom Hall, VP Experience at Lonely Planet said, 'I think now is the perfect time to update that bucket list with under-the-radar places you might have overlooked in the past,' and we couldn't agree more.

Revealing their Top 10 'off the beaten track destinations around the UK', Sony Mobile and Lonely Planet have suggested the following – we've added our own twist on them to get you even further away from the crowds.

Tresco Abbey Garden, Tresco, Isles of Scilly

Situated on the second-largest island in the archipelago, this sub-tropical garden has been described as 'like Kew without the glass' and features plants from more than 80 countries. However, this family-run island has much more to offer than just palms and proteas. There are two freshwater pools: Abbey Pool and Great Pool, which are excellent spots for watching dunlin, plovers and migratory birds, for example.

Portmeirion, Wales

This Italianate-style village on the coast of North Wales was made famous by 1960s cult TV series *The Prisoner*. With its colourful architecture, picturesque gardens and coastal views, the village is popular with tourists. But pick up one of the woodland trails heading south west towards the coast and you'll find plenty of quieter, but equally majestic, scenery.

Holkham Beach, Norfolk

Most photographers concentrate on the wider views here, but the dune systems at Holkham are actually ideal for more intimate landscapes. Marsh helleborine, corn salad, pyramidal orchid and southern marsh orchid appear here, but they should only be shot from the boardwalks – sand dunes are fragile and plant communities can easily be destroyed by trampling.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

The power of photography

I'd like to tell you about my life-changing moment. In 2018 I booked a four-day excursion to Belgium and France for my wife's 50th. My shoulder bag was packed, with two DSLRs, three fast f/2.8 lenses and my copy of AP to read on the coach.

It started well but at the end of the second day my shoulder was aching and the following day the pain became more intense. The camera bag and I were in the bad books for putting a dampener on the occasion. On our return I was dispatched to the GP 'to get it sorted'. The 6th of December 2018 was the day I was told that the ache in my side was a large chest mass, probably cancer. This was confirmed in February as thymus cancer. Intense chemo and radiotherapy were followed by full surgery in May, then a long period of recovery. October 2019 brought the news that, despite all efforts, a sliver of tumour remained, and my cancer was now terminal. Most of 2020 was a blur, with a clinical trial for a new cancer drug. With lockdown, shielding and more chemo this was probably my lowest point, and I started to

'dispose' of things. Unbeknown to anyone, full files of my photos were simply thrown away, as I felt there was no point in keeping them.

Then I was encouraged to take snaps of our lockdown Christmas, and I felt a spark. The camera felt at home in my hand. A few more snaps later and my wonderful, supportive wife produced a copy of my once-favourite magazine. After several weeks, and more AP copies, that spark became a flame again. Cameras and kit were cleaned and prepped and now, I once again carry a camera everywhere. My days are filled harassing the local wildlife with my D7100 and 100-400mm, or loving the sound and feel of my Canon AE-1 as I capture another end-of-lockdown shot on FP4, and my old Nikon EM that's loaded and ready with infrared film for the return of green trees and blue skies, because there's a space on my shelf for a new infrared file.

And that is my double life-changing story connected with my love of photography. If it can help inspire one other person it will have been worth sharing. **John Few**

HMRC bill, cameras held up in customs, a 14-day trial acceptance period for buyers, liquidating a pension scheme, and endless profuse apologies, saying he would pay within seven days, but no money.

In October I got a solicitor on to it, as a result of which he eventually offered to repay the outstanding amount in ten weekly payments. The first two came in on time, the next three were late, then they stopped altogether. My solicitor then instigated court proceedings, which resulted in a Court Judgement Order for monthly payments, which has been ignored. The last I heard the Court is sending in the High Court Enforcement Officers. He still owes me £2,500 plus costs, some of which I cannot claim. With interest this will have almost cost me as much as he still owes me, having had my money since last March.

If anybody else has experienced this with him please get in contact via AP who can pass on my email address. Perhaps we can get together to bring him to book.

Tim Patrick

We contacted Mr Walnes about this in December and agreed to suspend publication of this letter until Easter to allow him time to settle his debt, which he promised to do. We also suspended his advertising. This promise has not been kept.

Nikon 1 system

I appreciate the artistry of photographers that want to manipulate using Photoshop or similar (I have Affinity) but I like to capture as real as possible, wars and all, the image I am looking at by careful choice of

LETTER OF THE WEEK WINS A SAMSUNG EVO PLUS MICROSD CARD. NOTE: PRIZE APPLIES TO UK AND EU RESIDENTS ONLY

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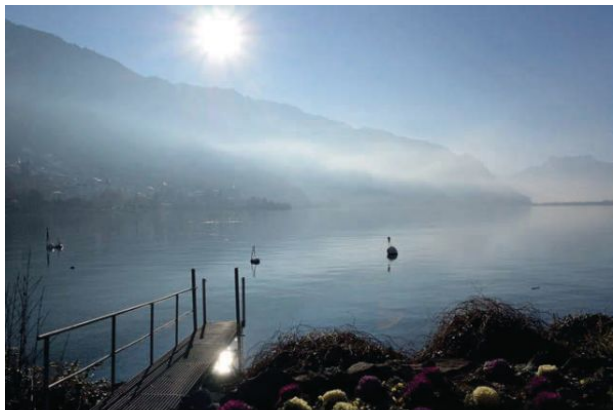
Seller beware

After reading your article on second-hand camera sales here is my experience. Do not send your equipment to Peter Walnes, who used to advertise in AP.

In March and July of 2020 I sent him my three medium format

cameras with lenses, all mint and boxed, for an agreed commission price of £8,000 when sold (all recorded on email). I had previously sold gear through him and had no trouble. This time it sold quickly but I had to keep chasing for the payment. Stupidly, I then sent the

second pair of medium format cameras with cases, lens hoods and filters, as before, for the agreed price. He told me he had buyers for them. I saw them go on his eBay shop and they sold within days, but the money was not forthcoming. I was given endless excuses: an



Peter Davies has a Nikon J4 and took this landscape in Montreux, Switzerland, with it

aperture, shutter speed and ISO. I support Barry in his assertion that the Nikon 1 system, given its limitations on noise at high ISO, is capable of very good results. I bought a Nikon 1 J4 from Wilkinsons as a two-lens kit, and use it alongside my Nikon D800.

Peter Davies

Ancient and modern

Back in my film days I used a 400mm Novoflex Rapid Focus lens, and it's the one piece of kit I most regret selling. I have now moved to mirrorless and use a 200-600mm lens with the most amazingly fast and accurate autofocus. But pointing it at birds in the sky that are relatively small in the frame I find myself switching the AF off more often than not. It occurred to me that my old Novoflex could be useful. I found a near-mint circa 1958 400mm Novoflex Rapid Focus on eBay for £130. It was Canon FD mount, which is no problem for my Sony A7 II, for which there are adapters to fit almost anything. A big advantage is that the A7 II has IBIS, which works a treat with the Novoflex, giving perfectly sharp results handheld at 160th

sec. My first attempt with it, wide open at f/5.6, resulted in some pretty sharp images of red kites. It's great fun to play with and didn't break the bank.

Mick Miller

Is Adobe worth the money?

Your article on the Adobe cloud subscription was interesting but it did not answer the front cover question as to whether it's worth the money, as it did not look at Adobe's rivals.

I pay for my subscription-free software up front, and it is mine to use for as long as I want to. With

Adobe, if I were to cancel the monthly subscription, my copies of Photoshop and Lightroom would effectively stop working.

David Price

This feature looked at all the additional applications and services that you get with the £9.98 p/m Photography subscription, for those readers who may only be aware of Photoshop, in order to make a better-informed assessment of its value-for-money. We have written about non-Adobe alternatives several times during the last year, in various articles.



Mick Miller took this red kite image with a Novoflex lens

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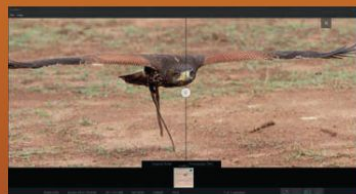
In next week's issue



© DAVID FOKOS

Drama of film

Large-format shooter David Fokos explains how he adds emotion to his mono images



© ANDY WESTLAKE

DxO PureRAW

Andy Westlake tries a program that aims to get more from your raw files

The female gaze

Amy Davies on the stories behind new book *Women Street Photographers*

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BEHIND THE PICTURE

The stories and the kit behind APOY-winning images

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After the Storm By Jayne Bond

Benedict Brain discovers the story behind this heart-warming wildlife image

I love being outdoors! Nature is a great healer and good for the soul,' declares wildlife photographer Jayne Bond. 'I do enjoy photographing landscapes and flora but wildlife is such a joy to see and to capture it on camera is always fabulous.'

Jayne's winning image – which won Round 2 of APOY 2021 (Natural World) – was taken close to Winterton on the Norfolk coast in December 2019. It's the time of year when the seals come ashore to give birth to pups. 'It's absolutely essential to follow the strict ethical code set out by the beach wardens to ensure the safety of the pups, so keeping a good distance away and using a long lens is imperative,' warns Jayne, who continues, 'When I saw this seal pup asleep against a sand drift it told such a



Jayne kept a good distance away from this grey seal pup and waited for the right light
Canon EOS-1D X Mark II, 500mm, 1/6400sec at f/5.6, ISO 1250

great story of the constant challenges these young pups face. The seal pup was fairly isolated so it was a great position to get a clean shot from a good distance.'

Jayne arrived at the beach in the early afternoon after about a five-hour drive. It had been raining quite hard and it was blowing a gale. Despite the poor weather Jayne decided to walk along the top of the dunes to get a sense of where the seals were and what photographic opportunities there might be for the next few days. 'I really believe it's vital to liaise with the wardens,' says Jayne, 'particularly at that time of year. The safety and well-being of the wildlife must always come first!'

Jayne had a few ideas of what she was looking for. 'Grey seals are such fabulous characters, full of personality and can be

quite inquisitive,' she says, and continues, 'I'm generally looking for pups that are alert with their eyes open, emphasising their absolute cuteness but when I came across this one, asleep against the sand drift, it seemed so peaceful after the storm.'

The weather was the biggest challenge for Jayne, who had spent so much time photographing seals the previous year in very stormy weather that it felt a bit like déjà vu. 'This seal pup was sleeping during the storm and a small sand-drift had formed against it,' explains Jayne. 'I took a few shots, but the light was very dull. It looked like the clouds were starting to disperse with occasional glimpses of sunlight breaking through so I decided to sit in that spot for a while. It was such a fabulous composition with the seal pup resting against the sand drift, it was definitely worth waiting for a bit of light.'

Jayne was using her trusty Canon EOS-1D X Mark II and 500mm lens. This image was shot at f/5.6, ISO 1250 and 1/6400sec. 'I appreciate that that shutter speed seems really fast,' explains Jayne, who goes on to say, 'but the 500mm lens is pretty big and heavy for me to hold steady, especially in windy conditions so it did help.'

'The Canon EOS-1D X Mark II was my dream camera. It's an absolutely fabulous piece of kit and can handle low light incredibly well, which is vital for wildlife photography,' she enthuses. 'Since taking this image though I've started to move over to a mirrorless system. I now have the Canon EOS R5 which I love and have paired this up with the Canon RF 100-500mm lens. The kit is still pretty new to me so I'm still getting used to all the settings but I love everything about it. I sold a few lenses and my 1D X Mark II through MPB. It's such an easy process and their service is superb.'

'Even though I've now changed to a mirrorless system I've still kept my 500mm lens which I use on the EOS R5 with an adapter. It's my favourite and most used lens – however, I've got to be a little bit pragmatic. I did carry it up the mountains in the Cairngorms when I was photographing the mountain hares, but I'm not getting any younger and carrying heavy gear around is getting tougher! So I've got a few tricky decisions to make over the coming months!'

Jayne Bond



After 35 years working in mainstream education, Jayne made the life-changing decision to take early retirement in 2013, allowing her to focus on the creative aspects of photography and art.
www.studiomilino.co.uk

Canon EOS-1D X Mark II



At a glance

£1,700-2,600

Body only (used condition)

- 20.2-million-pixel full-frame CMOS sensor
- ISO 100-51,200, extendable to ISO 50-409,600
- 14fps shooting, or 16fps in live view
- Internal 4K 60fps video recording
- 61-point AF with 41 cross-type

RELEASED in early 2016 the Canon EOS-1D X Mark II has a 20.2MP full-frame CMOS sensor. Designed for sports and action photographers, it has an all-new 61-point autofocus system that includes 41 cross-type points for accuracy, while Canon's exclusive Dual Pixel AF allows focusing in live view and movie mode.

What we said

'This camera does exactly what you want it to, it has the autofocus and frames per second to capture whatever picture your eye can see.'

'The super-accurate autofocus was instantly picking out the details I wanted. Would I buy one? In a word, no. I would buy two. This camera is so impressive that if you didn't replace both your bodies you'd find yourself constantly swapping the 1DX Mk II onto the lens you wanted to use.'

What to pay

When we ran a Field Test on the Canon EOS-1D X Mark II back in June 2016, it cost £5,199 (body only). Over the years we've seen the price drop steadily, and it can now be picked up for around £1,700 to £2,600 (body only).

MPB is the sponsor of
Amateur Photographer of the Year 2021



www.mpb.com

Postcards from the edge

With a 2021 UK-based holiday inevitable, **Peter Dench** describes how the seaside shaped him and talks to photographers who regularly stroll along the prom

I spent three summers as a teenager working in the Weymouth joke shop located 150 metres from the beach. Every hour I braced myself for the swell of new arrivals. Families, groups and couples from Bristol, London and the Midlands would pile in. The old man and a wolf mask sold well. As did the Boob Inspector, Damn Seagulls and Sh*t Head caps. The biggest seller was the Heavy Drinking cap – two cans of beer could be strapped to the sides, there was a tube to drink through. Some would take photos wearing the caps without paying. The boss wouldn't have been pleased but he was usually upstairs with his mistress or in the pub across the road. It was all very 'Carry On Weymouth.'

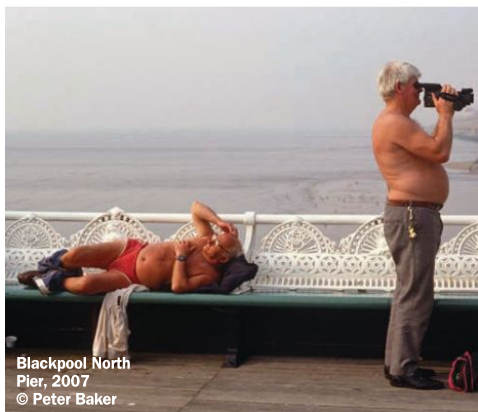
When I wasn't working in the joke shop, I'd be sneaking into one of the half-dozen holiday camps looking for adventure. Every week there'd be a change-over of holiday-makers, the town refreshed. I was overwhelmed at the diversity of the visitors, their accents, clothing and the fact that they'd paid to visit where I lived. It was an awakening that the seaside had national appeal. I was instilled with an ambition to do the reverse journey and see where the 'grockles' came from, what West Bromwich, Wolverhampton, Walsall and other places not beginning with W looked like. From the way I see colour, to the saucy seaside sense of humour, the seaside has irrefutably shaped me

as a photographer and inspired generations. The books, *A Day Off* by Tony Ray-Jones, *The Last Resort* by Martin Parr, *Pierdom* by Simon Roberts and John Hinde's Butlin's holiday camp collection – seminal sandcastles on the beach of photographic history.

Blackpool

In 2008 I embarked on a 16-day road trip around Britain with a German journalist called Michael, to find out if the clichés that exist about the country are true. Every cafe we stopped at, customers would be peering over their cup of tea reading a book about Dunkirk or the Battle of Britain. Every market we visited, there were stalls selling framed pictures of a Spitfire or HMS Vanguard. Michael had worked across the globe and on the front line of human peril and conflict, he'd seen a lot. Nothing had prepared him for Blackpool. When we arrived on a sunny day, there were surprisingly few people on the beach. I took him to the Blackpool Tower Lounge where most of the people were. I observed Michael hopping from one foot to the other. This seemed strange and went to ask if he was ok? 'Peter, I have never felt carpets this sticky,' he replied. This made me proud. Everything I enjoy about the British can be found in Blackpool and photographers have regularly been lured by its lights.

For around eight years,



Blackpool North
Pier, 2007
© Peter Baker



That Golden Mile,
Blackpool, 2017.
© Gisela Szlatoszlavek

documentary and street photographer Gisela Szlatoszlavek has been driving the 55 miles from her home in Rochdale to photograph Blackpool. She's not a foreign eye on the most typical of English resorts. Gisela (pronounced Geese-la) is as Lancashire as hotpot, and as working class as a knobbly knee contest. Her German first name was bestowed by her dad (with military connections), her surname adopted from her husband Craig, also a keen street photographer who she regularly snaps alongside. 'We'll get to Blackpool for breakfast, usually about 8am, then walk up slowly. I'll tend to walk around Coral Island, Central Pier and Southern Pier. We'll tend to go



home about 5-7pm depending on the season,' explains Gisela. 'I did originally go to Manchester, but I didn't enjoy it, there was nothing different, the people were the same. I started going to Blackpool, you've got your stags, your hens, the shops and piers. You can walk along that golden mile and back and everything would've changed. I don't like to sit down, I move about a lot, near us we have a beauty spot, it's a lake, why would I want to walk around the lake when I can walk up and down Blackpool prom!' Gisela's images are bright, bold and occasionally, beautiful – much like Blackpool. 'When people go to Blackpool, you go with the flow, you don't really care who sees you. It's like another world. The characters let themselves go, they relax – that's what a British holiday's about, just having fun,' she adds.

Some 300 miles away as the seagull flies, on the Kent coast photographer Heather Tait is producing images that define the seaside town where she lives: 'Each frame I take in Margate is the brush stroke to a bigger picture,' reveals Heather who lives in Cliftonville, a mile east of Margate beach. Despite the rapid socio-economic changes taking place through regeneration, it remains one of the poorest wards in the country. It's culturally rich, ethnically mixed and consistently vibrant. 'We have one of the largest Roma populations in the country and many of my images document these communities. Brexit fears and rising rents are beginning to push people out. The Roma community in particular are being threatened.'

Richard Baker's photographs of the British seaside won him third prize in Daily Life, Stories category at the 1994 World Press Photo Awards including one peculiar image where a man with a sore-looking bottom bends to adjust his tiny towel on Minehead promenade. Richard grew up on an estate near Southend-on-Sea: 'When I bought my first camera, I headed to the seafront. Once I was in my teens and in the possession of my first SLR, it seemed the obvious place to go and put into practice all the rules that I'd read about in photography magazines like *Amateur Photographer*. The first photography book I bought was Tony Ray-Jones, *A Day Off*, and I definitely wanted to emulate it. Those were the first I developed myself (sadly lost, after a

basement flood) but which formed the basis of a portfolio that gained me a place on the Documentary Photography course in Newport. Getting off the train and walking to the seafront is still as exciting to me as it was when I was a boy – the salty sea and vinegar on chips in the nostrils. There's also the expanse of sand and sky to take in, the chance of meeting your lifelong partner, a little mischief while your mum isn't looking, maybe. Seasides are playgrounds for the uninhibited, theatres for the eccentric, landscapes for the plain odd.'

A world within a world

Over a 40-year career, photographer Barry Lewis was regularly commissioned to photograph the seaside and explains his fascination. 'It's memories of your childhood and the otherness of the seaside. People change gear, they've got their four gears while they're living their working life and for those few weeks when they're at the seaside, they go into this fifth gear – they let go. There was definitely a release, they were more open. You approach people at the seaside to take their picture and absolutely everyone would say yes. Whereas say you're in east London, you'd only get about 50% say yes, even though that was my patch. The seaside was a great shooting gallery. To make mistakes and make friends.'

Barry grew up in the suburbs of post-war London. Around the age of ten, he remembers climbing on the back of his father's motorbike, his mother, sister and luggage piled in the side-car before revving off to Margate, Folkestone or Herne Bay. When he left school in 1966, in one summer Barry got a job as kitchen porter at Butlin's holiday camp in Bognor. It was a world within a world, a cloud-cuckoo land of alcohol and dating. 'I'd gone to an all-boys school and hadn't really met girls, they were always these strange exotic creatures. Butlin's was where you learnt life, or tried to.'

Sixteen years later, Barry returned to Butlin's for several weeks on assignment for *Observer Magazine*. The Kodachrome captured colours as sumptuous as a knickerbocker glory: happy campers after a space hopper championship, Dr Fun entertaining families, the final of the Glamorous Grandmother competition, Miss Lovely Legs of Great Britain



Young diver,
Margate, 2006
© Barry Lewis



Man falling backwards into a swimming pool at Butlin's holiday camp, Skegness, 1982.

© Barry Lewis

competition, teen romances and the iconic frontline staff, the Redcoats. In 2020, Barry's photographs were published as a book by Hoxton Mini Press. At the time, Butlin's saw his photos as a PR disaster. 'Now given time for things to mellow, Butlin's loves this book. I've had lots of responses from people wanting things to be still like that,' he says.

Nostalgia

Since the growth of existing seaside resorts and creation of new ones, stimulated by rapid developments of road and rail transport in the mid-19th century, photography and the seaside became as inevitable as the British and sunburn. Thomas Cook excursions were evolving and the 1871 Bank Holidays Act introduced four additional holidays, further fuelling the seaside sojourn. Commercial and portrait portrait photographers flocked to set up businesses, professional photographers honed their craft and amateur photography flourished with the development of affordable and handheld cameras.

Every photographer has a unique vision of the seaside nourished by childhood holidays, classic television sitcoms, the media and the work of preceding photographers. A lot can be documented at the seaside about the state of the nation: decline and regeneration, communities of the retired and émigrés, the ebb and flow of day-trippers. And a lot can be observed about the mentality of the British by how they behave, their habits and traditions. The seaside lowers inhibitions and often brings out the ridiculous, exciting ingredients for the lens.

'We were walking near Blackpool's north pier, we'd just put our cameras away and bumped into Martin Parr – the annoying thing is, if I'd had my camera out a couple of minutes longer, we'd have got him in one of our pictures,' admits Gisela. With foreign travel in chaos this summer, Britain's beaches will be booming. The only way to capture nostalgia is to photograph today. Keep your camera ready and who knows what you might see beside the seaside, beside the sea.

AP



Family and flags, Margate, 2018.
© Heather Tait

That Golden Mile by Gisela Szlotoszavek and *Lockdown CT9 and Cliftonville West 2014-2019* by Heather Tait are published by Fistful of Books. *Butlin's Holiday Camp 1982* by Barry Lewis is published by Hoxton Mini Press.

KIT LIST

Benro Mach 3 tripod

Edd uses a tripod all the time, not only for stability but he also finds it helps him slow down and consider the composition more mindfully. A remote shutter release is used to help minimise camera shake at the point of capture.

Gitzo Adventury 30L bag

Edd doesn't drive and so does a lot of walking, especially when exploring the South Downs. So having a comfortable bag is essential for him - the Gitzo Adventury 30L is the best he's found so far.

LEE Landscape polariser

Edd uses a polariser on every shot. Partly because it's permanently stuck on his filter holder. But also because he loves the creative way it helps him to control and emphasise the light and dark areas of a scene.

Nikon D610 infrared converted camera - 720nm

An old camera was converted to infrared by Advanced Camera Services, one of the best decisions Edd ever made. It got him hooked on black & white photography and helped him get the best out of high-contrast, blue sky days.

'Local' – Birling Gap

Nikon D810, 18mm, 1.3sec at f/7.1, ISO 400

The lone tree

and other stories

The local landscape helped photographer Edd Allen get creative closer to home during the lockdown(s). He talks to **Benedict Brain** about his vision and approach to the land and sea



Edd Allen

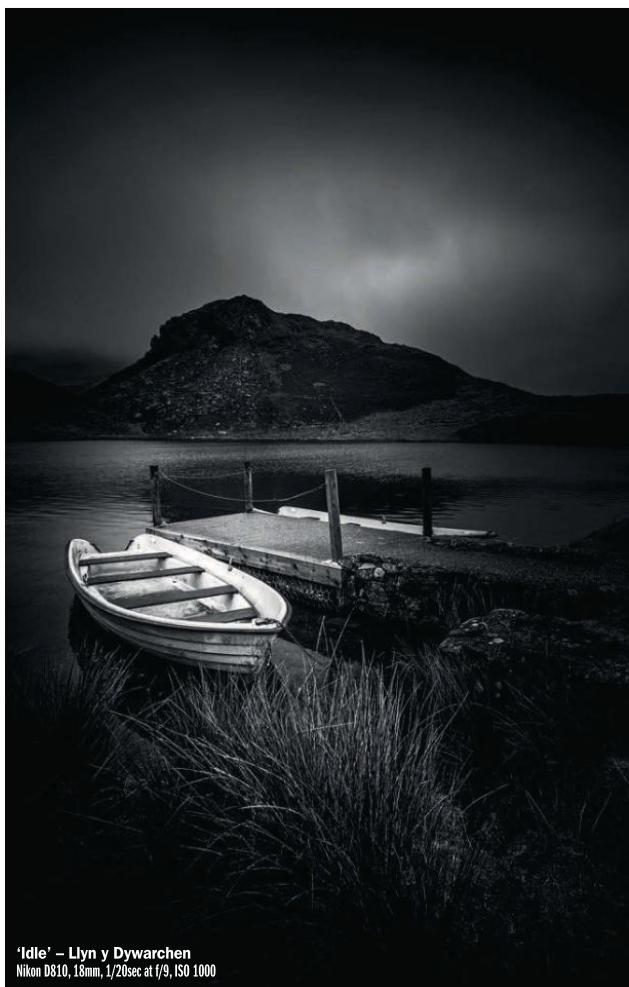
Edd Allen is a landscape photographer living between the South Coast and the South Downs, who loves exploring his local area and seeking out new

photographic opportunities. He is drawn to dark, moody and atmospheric scenes. Visit his Instagram [@eddallen82](#).

Stomping across the windswept, dramatic and ever-changing landscape of the South Downs and the South Coast with camera in hand is when and where photographer Edd Allen is at his most content. The drama of the dynamic topography is reflected in Edd's moody monochromatic captures of the area. Rich and sumptuous black and white tones evoke the haunting beauty of the region. 'I feel very lucky to discover and explore my local area photographically,' reveals Edd after lockdown travel restrictions prohibited him from photographing in other parts of the country. 'I have been able to carry on taking photos during these hard times and have found countless photographic opportunities hidden away, closer to home that I would have otherwise ignored.'

Think local

'I love the feeling of stumbling across something new and trying to figure out how to take a photograph of it,' explains Edd. 'When the weather starts to put on a show, I often find myself sprinting like a madman across the hills or along the rocky coastline trying to reach a good spot for a composition. I am definitely not able to commit to one photograph and sit back while the conditions unfold. I like to move about a lot.'



'Idle' – Llyn y Dywarchen
Nikon D810, 18mm, 1/20sec at f/9, ISO 1000

➤ Edd is drawn to the solitude of being outside and being able to connect with nature. Towns, cities, concrete and people make him feel stressed and anxious and this is when he becomes frustrated. However, walking across the hills or along the coast on his own with a camera for company feels like an escape from the chaos and where he can be himself. 'I enjoy trying to capture how being by the sea or amongst the trees makes me feel and hope that I can get this across in my photos,' says Edd.

The lone tree

Solitary, weather-beaten lone trees feature strongly in Edd's work. 'I find that each tree seems to have its own character and I love trying to capture that on camera,' he explains. 'Lone trees can be particularly expressive and have a sense of loneliness that seems to resonate with me. We live in crazy times and receive every bit of information in an instant and super-fast. So, seeing a tree or an old building, sitting there alone watching the days go past, away from the crowds, is something that has always drawn me in.'

Edd has been predominantly photographing in black & white since having an old Nikon converted to infrared. Before that, he would occasionally convert a colour picture to mono but found it hard to strip a scene of its colour. 'Now I will go out and spend an entire day using only my infrared camera,' he confirms. 'I used to moan when I saw the sky was blue, and sulk when there weren't any rain clouds around. But shooting black & white more often has helped me to embrace those high-contrast days and I often prefer those conditions for black & white photography.'

'I don't set out to take pictures in any particular way, but I guess I have a few basic rules that I follow. I am a neat freak and like trying to find order in chaos, and so I try to apply this to my work. However, most of the time I am just reacting to what's in front of me and go with what feels right at the time.'

Drawing inspiration from other photographers' work and trying to figure out how they achieved a look provided a solid creative springboard for Edd, as he started to notice the use of infrared photography in the work of photographers such as Matthew Dartford, Lee Acaster and

Jeremy Barrett. 'I was blown away at how black & white photography looked when they shot with an infrared camera,' says Edd, who continues, 'so when I upgraded my equipment, I had my old camera converted to infrared. It is without a doubt one of the best decisions I have made and I highly recommend it to anyone. It has definitely changed how I see the landscape and helped me get to know black & white photography.'

Using two cameras, one regular and one converted to infrared, Edd will alternate between the two depending on the conditions. 'I love my Zeiss Distagon 18mm wideangle lens and find this suits most subjects but will also use a zoom lens when required. I always use a tripod and enjoy the slow methodical approach to each shot. I also use filters on most photographs and find they help with controlling the light that is available.'

AP



'Vestige' – Newhaven Harbour
Nikon D810, 70-200mm, 1/1600sec at f/7.1, ISO 250



**'Worship' – St Thomas
Becket Church, Fairfield**
Nikon D610, 18mm, 2 secs at f/9, ISO 100



Why it works

◀ The lone tree holds a special allure to many photographers. Perhaps it would even be classified as a sub-genre of landscape photography in its own right. For Edd, the lone tree can be particularly expressive and reflects his own state of mind in an autobiographical and metaphorical way that speaks to his yearning to escape from the craziness of the modern world. It's not just the wind-bent lone tree, battling the weather though, it's also the beautiful simplicity of the composition – the careful positioning of the tree in the frame echoes a sense of loneliness and isolation. However, it is the drama of the light that makes this image shine. The tree and foreground bathed in light set against the magnificent dark, moody and tempestuous sky creates a stark contrast and further accentuates the isolation and exposure of the tree. The flecks of snow artfully captured add another visceral dimension altogether and are the icing on the cake.

Paul Merton

Harry Borden says Paul Merton's expressive face and willingness to improvise were an asset in his shoots

I first photographed Paul Merton in October 2000. He was 43 and had been a well-known comedy writer, performer and television presenter for several years on programmes including *Have I Got News For You* and *Room 101*. I really liked his clever, deadpan style of comedy and was a fan of the shows he appeared in. I've since seen him at the Edinburgh Festival twice and he's amazing at improvising – he's so relaxed and in control of what he's doing.

The shoot was commissioned by the *Observer Magazine* and took place in the Langham Hilton hotel, opposite Broadcasting House in central London. I had about half an hour to do it. I was shooting with my Fujifilm GW690 (a 6x9 film rangefinder camera) and my Hasselblad 500CM. Before Merton arrived, I had set up a flash head with an octa softbox.

I remember him turning up in a black hat and coat. I assumed he had been wearing them to avoid being recognised

in the street, as the hat covered a lot of his face. He's well over 6ft tall and much quieter than you might think from seeing his television performances.

When I'm photographing someone famous and working with a stylist, the clothes the stylist has brought sometimes makes them look awkward. In Merton's case, I thought he looked great in what he was already wearing, so I asked him to keep the hat and coat on.

About a month earlier, I had photographed fellow comedian Ronnie Corbett and had asked him to put on a pair of bulbous red lips made of wax, brought along by my assistant (see AP 12 December 2020). As Corbett had often appeared in drag, I'd assumed he would be happy to wear them, but he refused and gave me a lecture about how you can't wear some elements of drag and not others.

However, I had kept the lips in my car's glove compartment until I had another suitable opportunity to use them. It's to Merton's credit that he went

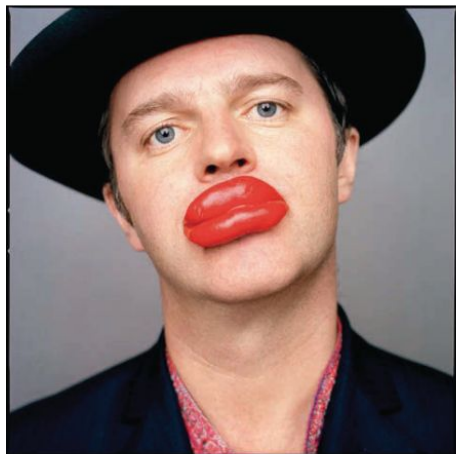
along with my idea when I suggested it. I took some shots of him wearing the lips and thought the idea worked quite well as he's got an expressive face. Rather than looking like a part of a drag outfit they looked more like a circus clown's exaggerated painted lips.

We got on well during the shoot and I immediately liked him on a human level, but by the end of it I didn't feel I knew much more about him, because he seemed quite a shy person.

The second time I photographed him was 12 years later in a shoot for *The Times* at the Pleasance Theatre in London, where he was performing. It was good seeing him again – I knew he was not covetous of his time and was willing to be playful and silly.

I was limited by the time available and good shooting locations at the theatre, so I set up a blue backdrop in an alleyway and just used natural daylight. Often, when I'm photographing well-known people, I ask them to give me

Harry found it easy to work with Paul Merton – this is Harry's favourite image of the two shoots



Good shots: Harry thought the 'red lips' shots worked well; and Merton unpredictably messed up his own hair



absence of thought. We're used to seeing celebrities giving you their million-dollar smile, so seeing them with a blank, inscrutable expression usually makes for an interesting picture.

The flip side is that when you say 'absence of thought' to someone, quite often they do something unpredictable and this happened with Merton: he messed up his hair and went through his visual repertoire of different facial expressions. He didn't mind how untidy he looked if it provoked a laugh.

I like the simplicity of those pictures of him in natural light with a plain background because for me everything is about interacting with the subject. Using unnecessary photographic techniques is so much ephemeral flim-flam that'll eventually look dated if you go too far down that path.

I was after something different which still felt natural, and I think I got some good pictures partly because his comedy is similar to my photography in that it's very spontaneous and improvisational.

My favourite image from both shoots is the one with the hat and coat. Those clothes and his expression make him appear quite furtive. His face occupies very little of the frame and it's almost turned away, so he's denying us the full-on connection that we're used to, in celebrity portraits. As it's human nature to want what you can't have, I think it makes the shot more compelling.

As told to David Clark



Harry Borden



Harry Borden is one of the UK's finest portrait photographers. He has won prizes at the World Press Photo awards (1997 and 1999)

and in 2014 he was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by the Royal Photographic Society. The National Portrait Gallery collection holds over 100 of his images. His new book of portraits of lone fathers, *Single Dad*, was recently published. Visit www.harryborden.co.uk.



Canon EOS M50 Mark II

A glance at the Mark II's spec shows little new over its predecessor.

Richard Sibley looks at it from a photographer's perspective



For and against

- + Small and lightweight body
- + Good image quality
- + Proven technology such as Dual Pixel AF
- + Eye AF is a useful addition
- Only minor improvements over the original
- No sensor-based image stabilisation
- Limited native lens line-up

Data file

Sensor	24.1MP Dual Pixel CMOS, 22.3x14.9mm
Output size	6000x4000
Focal length mag	1.6x
Lens mount	Canon EF-M
Shutter speeds	30-1/4000sec
Sensitivity	ISO 100-25,600 (ISO 51,200 extended)
Exposure modes	PASM, Movie
Metering	Evaluative, Partial, Centre, Spot
Exposure comp	+/- 3EV in 0.3EV steps
Continuous shooting	Up to 10fps (7.4fps with AF)
Screen	3-in fully articulated touchscreen
Viewfinder	2.36m-dot, 0.62x magnification
AF points	3,975
Video	4K at up to 25fps
External mic	3.5mm stereo
Memory card	SD, SDHC, SDXC UHS-1
Power	LP-E12
Battery life	250 using EVF, 305 with LCD
Dimensions	116.3x88.1x58.7mm
Weight	387g inc battery and card

Let's save a lot of your reading time by getting this out the way early on; if you already own the Canon EOS M50, then the new Mark II version isn't worth the upgrade. With the new version of the camera priced at £590 body only, there is a chance you may be able to sell the original camera for a fair price and pay a small difference for the upgraded features, but there really won't be a real advantage for the majority of users. I'll add a slight caveat to that which is that if you create video for TikTok or Instagram Reels, the addition of vertical video shooting and Eye AF, when shooting in Full HD, may make it worthy of consideration.

Features

That caveat tells you probably all you need to know about the target market for the updated Canon EOS M50; there is very little new here for photographers

with the camera boasting the same 24.1MP APS-C sensor, the same 1.04m-dot touchscreen, the same 2.36m-dot EVF and the same DIGIC 8 image processor. Oh, and the body is identical, not a button, dial or millimetre difference. That said, NFC connectivity has been removed, along with the NFC logo on the camera, so thankfully there are some external ways of telling the two generations apart, although the 'Mark II' designation is probably the bigger giveaway.

Hopefully your interest has now been piqued to ask 'So what has Canon introduced on the Mark II?' Well there is improved AF – most notably Eye AF has been introduced for photo and Full HD video. But sadly Dual Pixel AF, and all it brings with it, is still missing from 4K video. Speaking of 4K video there is still a hefty 1.5x crop when shooting in this mode, which requires using wider focal lengths than you would



Canon only makes a few EF-M lenses, but you can use EF-mount DSLR lenses via an adapter
 Canon EF 70-300mm f/4-5.6 IS USM at 105mm,
 1/80sec at f/5.6, ISO 800

when shooting in Full HD. It's an annoyance given that Canon is renowned for producing cameras with excellent video features.

As mentioned, the camera now recognises the camera rotation to record video in portrait orientation. There have also been some small tweaks to the menu, and the EVF now rotates the shooting info when the camera is turned to shoot in portrait format.

The vast majority of the differences are aimed at those now known as content creators who demand a camera that can shoot photos, video and also stream footage live to the internet. With this in mind the HDMI output is now a 'clean feed' meaning that none of the display data is shown. This means the camera can be plugged into an external video recorder, but more likely directly into a computer video capture card for streaming to YouTube. Speaking of which, the camera

can now stream wirelessly to YouTube via a Wi-Fi connection. The ability to use the EOS M50 Mark II as a webcam via the Canon EOS Utility software remains. In fact most of the differences, except for the loss of NFC, are software based, which begs the question as to how many could have been made via a firmware update.

Although the camera is still stated as using the DIGIC 8 processor, this is something of a loose term. So it's likely that there has been a tweak to the processing system to help enable a few of the more intensive features, such as Eye AF in video capture, streaming video and the clean HDMI feed.

For photographers the addition of Eye AF will be welcome, as will improved battery life, which is up from 235 shots to 250 using the viewfinder and 305 with the LCD, under CIPA standard testing. This could again imply that the

processor, or processing, has been improved. Unchanged is the shooting rate, which will deliver up to 10fps when in Single AF mode; however, this drops to a still-respectable 7.4fps when Continuous AF is being used.

Build and handling

As stated, bar the cosmetic changes from the removal of the NFC logo and the new Mark II designation, the original and contemporary cameras are identical. That is to say that the EOS M50 Mark II is a small, DSLR-style-bodied mirrorless camera that fits remarkably well in hand for its size. The body itself is plastic, but feels solid and sturdy, although as you would expect for the price it lacks any kind of real weather-sealing.

Controls feel slightly more akin to a compact camera, rather than having the plethora of buttons that adorn the bodies of more enthusiast models. That said the

At a glance

£590 body only

£700 with 15-45mm lens

- 24.1MP APS-C sensor
- 10fps continuous shooting
- 2.36-million-dot OLED viewfinder
- 3in fully articulated touchscreen
- 4K video

front-facing single control dial surrounds the shutter button, and it is complemented nicely by a touchscreen that features onscreen controls that are actually usable for changing exposure settings quickly. Combined with an onscreen Quick Menu everything you would want to change on the fly can be quickly accessed, albeit slower than if it had dedicated buttons.

Viewfinder and screen

The Canon EOS M50 Mark II's screen is a 3in fully articulated LCD that can be turned in to protect the screen when not in use, or rotated out to the side to be front-facing for those who want to film or photograph themselves. I found the screen to be bright, clear and unremarkable, in a positive way; it functions as you would expect, and the touch capabilities are a more-than-welcome addition.

It's a similar story with the EVF. With a 2.36-million-dot resolution it is on a par with the competition and produces a clear image. I shot a lot of images through the viewfinder in fairly early morning sunlight and, as a left-eye shooter, I did sometimes find a little light creeping in, which would be easily solved by using a slightly more pronounced eye cup. It's only a slight annoyance rather than anything prohibitive.

Autofocus

With Canon's tried and tested Dual Pixel AF, autofocus is snappy and accurate. Dual Pixel AF means that there are phase detection pixels on the sensor, which are combined with regular contrast detection AF to bring the best of both worlds. It's easy to set up and use,



Focal points

Canon has retained the same simple, beginner-friendly body design as the original EOS M50

SD card

The EOS M50 Mark II saves its raw and JPEG images to a single SD card. There's no need to buy an expensive UHS-II card, as the camera can't make use of the extra speed.

Mic input

A 3.5mm stereo mic socket is found on the side for audio input when recording video. Micro USB and HDMI ports are found on the side of the handgrip, beneath a single cover.

Battery life

The LP-E12 battery is rated to 250 shots when using the viewfinder, or 305 with the LCD, according to CIPA standard tests.



Video recording

As well as a video recording start/stop button on top of the camera, there is also the option to press an onscreen button. Countdown timers for video are also an option.

Built-in flash

A small flash is hidden in the viewfinder housing, and has to be popped up manually when needed. There's also a hot shoe for fitting more powerful external units.

M-Fn button

There is a single custom button on the top of the camera which by default is assigned to change ISO sensitivity. Other functions can be selected from the camera's menu.



particularly when combined with Touch AF using the screen. This is available when using the EVF, as well as when shooting via the rear screen.

When counting all the available single AF points there are a total of 3,975 different positions available, offering almost edge-to-edge AF. When using a tracking mode there are up to 143 available starting positions. And of course there is Face tracking, and the new addition of Eye AF. Both Face and Eye tracking work automatically when they have been selected in the camera's setting menu. I found

Eye AF to work well, although perhaps a touch slower than cameras higher up in their respective ranges.

Overall the autofocus works great for both photo and video, as long as you aren't demanding too much of it in terms of photographing fast-moving and erratic subjects. It is more than capable for the entry-level or enthusiast photographer.

Performance

The EOS M50 Mark II is a very capable and forgiving camera. It is small and light enough to take with you everywhere, particularly



Canon's EF-M 18-150mm is a very capable everyday all-in-one zoom
Canon EF-M 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 IS STM at 89mm, 1/200sec at f/6.3, ISO 125



enthusiast photographer, with the AF doing a good job of keeping up with moving subjects where jumps in focus plane aren't dramatic. Shooting at 10fps the focus is fixed, but the additional few frames may prove useful in some situations.

Metering works as you would expect. I found myself making slight tweaks to the exposure compensation using the touchscreen control, particularly when I was experimenting with some backlit shots of blossom. The onscreen EV adjustment is not as quick as having it on a dedicated dial, but again, it is fast enough to not be an issue. At low sensitivity settings the dynamic range provides enough detail to be recovered from the shadow areas, though there does tend to be a little more noise in these areas than produced by some of the competition.

Images have the Canon colour and contrast that you would expect, with blues and greens in landscapes looking particularly vivid. Canon's Camera Connect app can be used to transfer images from the camera to a smartphone, and it is one of the easiest and most reliable apps to set up and use that I have used. This perhaps goes some way to explaining the reason Canon chose to omit NFC. Everything on the EOS M50 Mark II is tried and tested and there are no surprises when it comes to image quality or performance. **AP**

as the EF-M lens line-up has eight compact lenses available. For a large part of my time with the camera, I used the EOS M50 Mark II with the Canon EF-M 18-150mm f/3.5-6.3 IS STM lens. This combination of camera and travel zoom lens focuses quickly, and whilst obviously lacking a large aperture, it was ideal for shooting a variety of different images, all whilst being very portable.

The 7.4fps shooting rate is more than enough for the

Verdict

9/10
8/10
9/10
8/10
9/10
8/10
8/10
8/10



I CAN'T recall reviewing a camera that has had such minor changes and yet required a whole new model rather than a firmware update. But at least its new features are welcome additions, particularly Eye AF. For those who are looking at the Canon EOS M50 Mark II as their first foray into a system camera, then it is an excellent choice for photography, and may serve as a smaller option for those still using a DSLR or an R-series camera. Then there are all the extensive and reliable features for the contemporary creator who may be streaming live on YouTube one day, then taking photos for Instagram the next, all whilst vlogging for YouTube.

That's not to say that the camera is without its faults. The crop that the original model had in 4K still remains, with 1.5x being quite a lot when you take into account that the kit lens is a 15-45mm zoom. With the 1.6x APS-C crop that means it's

24mm equivalent, which becomes a 36mm equivalent when shooting 4K. That is a nice focal length for filmmaking, but less so for vlogging or filming yourself as many people want to do. Then there is the lack of Dual Pixel AF in 4K mode, too.

The elephant in the room is Canon's ongoing support for the EF-M mount. So far there have been 11 EOS M cameras since its launch in 2012, but there are currently only eight lenses available, with five of these being compact zoom lenses with variable apertures. Meanwhile the EOS R and its RF mount was launched in 2018 and already has 20 lenses in the range. The argument is presumably that for the target market there doesn't need to be a whole range of lenses, and there is always the EF to EF-M mount adapter for those who do need more. But you do wonder what the future now holds for the EOS M lineup.

ISO and noise



The crops shown right are taken from the area outlined left in red

The 24.1MP APS-C sensor performs as you would expect, with low ISOs looking clean and detailed. As the sensitivity increases so does noise reduction, with actual colour noise being very well controlled. I would happily shoot at ISO 6400 when I needed that sensitivity for low light, although it does come with a drop in detail. Of course if you shoot raw you can find a nice balance yourself. Those making smaller prints or shooting for web use will most likely find ISO 12,800 acceptable, but the top two sensitivities are best avoided; they lack any fine detail due to aggressive noise reduction and artefacts.

RAW ISO 100



RAW ISO 1600



RAW ISO 6400



RAW ISO 12,800



RAW ISO 25,600



RAW ISO 51,200



John Heywood

We find out why the Nikon AF-S Nikkor 28-300mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR is John's most treasured lens



John is an avid AP reader and lives in Northamptonshire. After a long career working as a professional photographer he now enjoys taking portrait photographs for pleasure. He can be followed on Instagram @jheywood58.

AP: Tell us about your photography background

JH: Age four, in 1953, I took my first photograph with my father's Kodak Box Brownie of my brother with my mother. When collecting the prints from the chemist my mother's face lit up with a smile. I decided then I wanted the power of photography to make my mother smile and give happiness to others.

In 1966, aged 17, I enrolled in the Royal Air Force as a Photographer. The practical and theoretical tuition was far superior to civilian colleges and universities. After ten years I no longer wanted to make a career with the RAF. On becoming a civilian I took up a position as a medical photographer for over eight years. Our local evening newspaper offered me better remuneration which I accepted. From the mid 90's I set up as a freelance photographer. In 2009 I retired from photography to enjoy being an avid amateur using my skills to raise funds for charity. I have always preferred to create positive images of life, although occasionally I have captured sombre moments for balance.

AP: What kit do you regularly carry in your camera bag?

JH: My Nikon D850 with the Nikon

28-300mm, the Nikon SB-400 flash and the Hahnel Modus 600RT flash with its Viper TTL wireless trigger, plus spare batteries. For non-people pictures I prefer to travel light with just the one camera and lens plus the Nikon SB400 flash.

AP: If you could pick one item of kit you couldn't live without, what would it be?

JH: The one item of kit I couldn't live without is my Nikon 28-300mm lens. When I purchased my Nikon FM2 camera in 1984 I also bought four fast Nikon primes from 28mm to 180mm. The weight was crippling, and I suffered from the 'having the wrong lens attached' syndrome. Now, I do not have to spend time fumbling for the right lens, risking missing the opportunity of a great shot, as I can instantly zoom in or out. It is a great walk-about-lens for most subjects. I rarely find myself needing any other lens.

AP: How long have you owned your favourite piece of kit?

JH: I bought the lens new in 2010. It has been a great workhorse and although it has received criticism in the photo press from some for being soft, I put my faith in it and have been paid back dividends. I enlarge images to 30x20in, no problem.



AP: Can you tell us a bit more about your favourite feature about this item?

JH: I love to shoot environmental portraits and have found it great for allowing me to take full-length shots and then zoom in for tighter head and shoulder images. Also, I can choose from what position I want to





John enjoys photographing environmental portraits. Here he captured a local blacksmith before work

take the photograph from, then zoom in or out to compose in-camera. With ordinary folk you have to work very quickly because they soon become self-conscious. Most of the above applies to landscape photography, too.

AP: Can you elaborate about

Below from left: John's Nikon D850 and lens, a smile from a Pork Pie seller, and a biker riding his Harley-Davidson through town



how the lens performs in use?

JH: I find documenting and portraying my four-year-old granddaughter with the Nikon 28-300mm lens a dream as young children have a mind of their own and the lens allows me to react at speed to instantly changing circumstances. It is wonderful for all kinds of documentary, environmental and studio portraiture, landscapes, animal and wildlife, floral and semi-macro. I've achieved excellent results in all the mentioned genres.

AP: Have you identified any weaknesses or disadvantages in your possession?

JH: It isn't weather-proof. Although the lens has received a soaking in a torrential downpour and continues to work faultlessly.

AP: If you could have one added feature, what would it be and why?

JH: To improve it, I would want more up-to-date optics, improved autofocus and VR, plus full weather-sealing as the British weather can be very changeable, especially when shooting landscapes. As I have already mentioned, you have to operate within the equipment's limitations.

AP: Do you have any plans to replace or upgrade?

JH: I do not have any plans to upgrade or replace my current kit.

AP: What do you think your kit bag will look like ten years from now?

JH: I like to stay active to keep my strength up, but at 72 I may have to think about lightening the load I carry at some point. If I am forced to change, I'll consider an APS-C Nikon camera and would likely pair it with a versatile zoom lens such as the AF-S DX Nikkor 18-300mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR.

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SECOND-HAND CLASSIC

Fujifilm X70

We revisit Fujifilm's fabulous pocket compact from five years ago

The large-sensor compact area of the market was booming in 2015 and by 2016 Fujifilm had filled the gap between the X30 and X100T by introducing a more portable model. The X70 stood out as being Fujifilm's most pocket-friendly model to boast a 16.3MP APS-C X-Trans CMOS II sensor, which was located behind an 18.5mm f/2.8 lens that's equivalent to 28mm. Like Fujifilm's X100 series, it employed a dedicated aperture ring around the lens barrel and upheld a robust build quality. Other key features included a 3in, 1.04-million-dot tilt-angle touchscreen, a 77-point AF system, Full HD video and burst shooting at up to 8fps.

What we said

- 'The sensor delivers images with excellent levels of detail and well-controlled image noise'
- 'The sweet spot of the lens is found at f/4, with diffraction seeing results soften from f/11 onwards'
- 'Dials are pleasing to the touch and are milled from aluminium for a quality feel'
- 'Distortion is very well controlled with only very minor pinch distortion present'

What to pay

The X70 was in production for a relatively short period of time. Many of those who bought one have held onto it, so there isn't a surplus of second-hand examples out there. Used X70's can fetch up to £495 in like new condition, while those in excellent condition cost around £460. Shop around and you should find a good condition example for around £420, just as we did on eBay.

How it fares today

It's almost five and half years old now, yet the quality of the images produced by the X70 still impress. It's no wonder so many photographers swear by it as their pocket partner for times when a smaller camera is preferable. You'll want to bear in mind that autofocus is a little sluggish and AF coverage isn't as wide as today's X-series compacts. It doesn't feature Bluetooth, but Wi-Fi is built-in.

New alternatives

It's surprising and a little disappointing that Fujifilm never directly replaced the X70. The Fujifilm XF10 that followed in 2018 featured a similar 28mm equivalent lens and f/2.8 maximum aperture, however its control layout is much simpler, its build quality isn't as robust and it uses a Bayer sensor rather than Fujifilm's proprietary X-Trans chip. It also has a fixed screen that can't be tilted.



The X70 has a stylish design and feels comfortable to hold with its rubberised handgrip and small thumb rest

Amateur
Photographer
Testbench
Recommended
★★★★★



Fujifilm made an optional VF-X21 optical viewfinder for the X70 that slots onto the hotshoe on the top plate



At a glance

£450-470

excellent condition

- 16.3MP APS-C X-Trans CMOS II
- 28mm (equivalent) f/2.8 lens
- ISO 200-6400 (raw), ISO 100-51,200 (JPEG)
- 3in, 1.04-million-dot tilting LCD touchscreen
- 340g (with battery and card)

For and against

- + Superb image quality for its size
- + Fantastic finish and feel
- + Host of body-mounted controls
- + Excellent customisation options
- + USB charging (Micro USB cable)
- No built-in viewfinder (optional VF-X21 available)
- Battery life (330 shots)
- Speed and sound of autofocus
- No weather-sealing

See over to find out what Fujifilm X70 owners have to say

What the owners think

Three Fujifilm X70 users give their verdict



Matthew's X70 got an accidental dunking in the English Channel, however it still continues to work
Fujifilm X70, 1/3000sec at f/2.8, ISO 200

For and against

- + Supported by a good range of accessories
- + Extremely sharp lens
- No weather-sealing
- Autofocus hunts when shooting video

Matthew Hyde

I bought my Fujifilm X70 in 2019 second-hand for the ridiculously low price of £150. I wanted to buy it because it was small, which meant it was good for being out and about. It also has a great lens which is sharp even wide open. It rarely saw much use until a family holiday in 2020 when I decided to finally put it through its paces. I was teaching my eldest daughter to bodyboard in the English Channel down in Dorset. We had braved the sea at Charmouth Beach and went in quite deep. The water was up to chest height at certain points. I was taking photographs of her whilst she was learning when three waves in succession hit both of us. She was sent flying off her board and my X70 took a swim. Unfortunately, the shutter button decided it had had enough and stopped working immediately. But, it is clearly a spartan of the camera world because despite it taking a swim in the English Channel, it still works. I do have to use back button focus and touch to shoot instead of the shutter button, but it works pretty seamlessly regardless. Well done, Fujifilm! To see more of my images visit www.matthydephotography.com or follow on Instagram @matthydephotography.

Janet Batchelor

I wanted a compact camera that I could always have on me when out and about so I opted for the X70, which I bought new in 2017. It's a purchase I've never regretted and four years on, it's still in regular use. During the past year I've taken it with me on my daily exercise to capture the neighbourhood during lockdowns. The fixed lens is ideal for the photography I like to pursue, from street to architecture, city and landscapes. The aperture ring, shutter speed and exposure compensation dials are all found on the exterior, which makes any exposure adjustments quick and easy. Image quality is excellent. My other camera, the Fujifilm X-T2, steps in when I want a different focal length or a faster lens for night photography.

For and against

- + Superb image quality
- No built-in viewfinder



Janet adores her Fujifilm X70 and accepts the inclusion of a built-in viewfinder would have made the camera far less compact
Fujifilm X70, 1/320sec at f/8, ISO 320



The X70 comes into its own for street scenes where shooting discreetly is key to getting the shot
Fujifilm X70, 1/320sec at f/5.6, ISO 320

Nick Barber

I picked up my X70 after falling in love with the colours produced by the Fujifilm X-T1. I was less enamoured by the X-T1's portability for my uses, so thought I'd try the fixed lens approach. The pocketable X70 was the first non-zoom camera I'd owned and it taught me a lot about framing and zooming with my feet. For a couple of years I would stick it in my jacket pocket at work and use it as an everyday walkaround tool – the wide lens and large sensor meant there was a lot of leeway to crop street shots too, without much loss of quality. My one bugbear with the camera was its less-than-snappy AF, so for impromptu shots I upgraded to the X100F. I still own my X70 and there are times when it still gets a run out when speed is not of the essence. To see more of my images, visit www.nickbarberphotography.co.uk or follow on Instagram @efsb.



For and against

- Persuades you to frame with your feet
- Autofocus speed

The combination of fast fixed lens and admirable ISO performance sees the X70 perform well in low-light situations
Fujifilm X70, 1/60sec at f/2.8, ISO 4000

LEE100 Hood

Michael Topham tests a hood for the LEE100 system

● £249 ● www.leefilters.com

WHEN LEE Filters redesigned its filter holder for the LEE100 system two years ago, it enhanced the experience of working with filters in several ways. Now the firm has designed a hood for the LEE100 holder. Like a standard lens hood it shields stray light hitting the front of the lens, which could otherwise result in unwanted glare, flare and a loss of contrast in images.

To mount the hood you're required to place the filter holder face down onto the rear of the hood, so the spring release is positioned opposite the hood lock. Once it's located in the recess, the four blue clips can be pulled up to the required height before they're rotated to secure the hood in place. This may sound complicated, but it's incredibly easy and takes just a few seconds. With the hood mounted, the holder can then be attached to the lens adapter ring in the usual way. Filters are inserted into the gap between the holder and the hood, and by unclipping the hood lock it's possible to rotate the hood independently from the holder – something you might want to do if you'd like to angle a grad filter but keep the hood level. The bellows of the hood are well made and let you adjust the level of shielding to your liking. Always keep a hand on the camera when the bellows are being adjusted though, to avoid disturbing your composition, or worse, knocking your set-up over.

I tested the hood with the Nikon Z 7II coupled to the Z 14-30mm f/4 S lens and experienced no vignetting at 14mm with two filters loaded in the holder and the bellows set to their widest position. How far you're able to extend the bellows before the hood creeps in at the edge of the frame requires some trial and error. I was able to shoot at 20mm without vignetting with the bellows half extended. Extending the bellows fully required me to zoom in to around 30mm to remove the dark edges around the perimeter of the frame.

Verdict

Although it's expensive, the LEE100 hood does what it's designed to do well. Fundamentally, it offers photographers who shoot outdoors with the LEE100 system adjustable control over how stray light is shielded – something that not all filter systems offer. It doubles up as a great way of protecting filters against rain and sea spray, but you'll want to drape a cloth over the gap between holder and hood to keep filters completely dry. For regular users of the LEE100 system, it's an accessory I'd thoroughly recommend.



Polariser

The hood can be used with the LEE100 polariser, but it does make it harder to access and control.

Tilttable

The hood can be tilted accurately to remove side lighting or prevent glare hitting the lens.

Hood lock

Allows the hood to be rotated and removed from the adjustment ring for speedy and easy attachment.

Weight

The LEE100 hood adds 269g to the weight of the LEE100 holder.

Amateur
Photographer
Testbench
Recommended
★★★★★

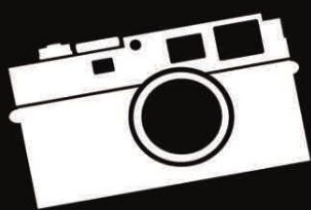
At a glance

- For LEE100 Filter Holder
- Water-resistant design
- Extendable bellows
- Independent rotation control
- 269g (488g including clamshell case)

PROTECTION

Although the hood is well constructed, it does have some plastic parts that could get damaged if it's mistreated. To ensure the hood remains well protected on your travels it comes supplied in a weather-resistant and softly lined clamshell case. This is rather thick and bulky, so be prepared for it to take up a good amount of space in your bag.





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Mamiya M645 1000S

John Wade discovers an elegantly small medium format camera

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WHEN Mamiya entered the medium format SLR market, it did so with a bang. First there was the RB67 in 1974, a lovely camera but big and heavy. Later, in 1982, an electronic version called the RZ67 arrived, just as big but even heavier. In between came the smaller, neater, easier-to-handle and – let's be honest – totally delightful M645. Launched in 1975 with a top shutter speed of 1/500sec, it was upgraded the following year, with its 1000S name denoting a new top speed of 1/1,000sec.

Like its big brothers, the M645 takes 120 film, but achieves trim dimensions of 15x11.5x9cm by

nicking an idea from cameras of the past, which doubled up the then traditional eight 6x9cm exposures on a roll to 16 in the 6x4.5cm size. The camera takes its name from this format, but the film travel sensing only allows 15 images to a roll. The smaller image size allows a shorter focal length and less expensive, standard lens, usually a Mamiya-Sekor C 80mm f/2.8, which is interchangeable with focal lengths from 24mm to 500mm.

The leaf shutter, incorporated in each lens in the RB/RZ cameras, now becomes an electronic focal plane shutter in the body, making further economies. It's adjustable down to eight seconds. A split-image rangefinder, twin shutter releases on the top and bottom of the body, built-in sports finder, waist-level or metered

eye-level finders, delayed action, mirror lock, depth of field preview and a wealth of accessories complete the M645 specification.

The M645 1000S was followed by a stripped-down version called the M645J, then the 645 Super, 645 Pro, 645 Pro-TL and 645E. After the M645J, the bodies switched from all-metal to a moulded plastic shell on a diecast metal frame. Specs improved with every model, but the later plastic-looking camera designs were a lot less attractive.

What's good Small and easy to handle, medium format images, good battery life.

What's bad Non-interchangeable film back, awkward to use handheld at eye-level.



How the M645 compares with the RB67 (left) and RZ67



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Buying Guide

129
cameras
listed &
rated

Our comprehensive listing of key camera specifications

Cameras

Cameras come in three types: DSLRs with optical viewfinders, mirrorless models with electronic viewing, and compact cameras with non-interchangeable lenses

Controls

Entry-level cameras tend to have simple, easy-to-understand controls, while more expensive models add lots of buttons and dials to give quick access to settings.

Viewfinder

The biggest difference between DSLRs and mirrorless cameras is that the latter use electronic, rather than optical viewfinders. Some advanced compact cameras also have built-in electronic viewfinders to complement their rear LCD screens.

Compact cameras

These range from small, pocketable models to large bridge-type cameras with long zoom lenses and SLR-style designs. In this guide, we're only including those with relatively large sensors for high image quality, raw format recording and manual controls.



Handgrip

DSLRs traditionally have relatively large handgrips, while many mirrorless models have much smaller grips to keep size down. However, some can accept accessory grips to improve handling with larger lenses.



Lens mount

Each camera brand uses its own lens mount, and mirrorless cameras use different lenses to DSLRs even from the same brand. However, mirrorless models can often use DSLR lenses via a mount adapter.



AMOST all serious photographers prefer to use cameras with interchangeable lenses, as this gives the greatest degree of creative flexibility. At one time, this meant digital single-lens-reflex (DSLR) cameras, but these have now been joined by mirrorless cameras that use electronic viewfinders. The latest models are true alternatives to DSLRs, offering the same image quality and creative options. Camera

manufacturers offer a range of options, from simple, relatively inexpensive beginner-friendly designs, to sophisticated professional models. In the middle of the range you'll find enthusiast cameras with more advanced control layouts. Meanwhile the term 'compact' refers to cameras with built-in lenses, regardless of their size. Many offer excellent image quality and full manual control.

Mirrorless cameras				SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	VIEWFINDER	MAX ISO	VIDEO	MIC INPUT	AF POINTS	BURST MODE (FPS)	VIEWFINDER	BUILT-IN Wi-Fi	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (in)	ARTICULATED LCD	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (mm)	HEIGHT (mm)	DEPTH (mm)	WEIGHT (g)
NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY												SHOOTING	SCREEN					
Canon EOS M200	£499		Basic entry-level viewfinderless model gains 4K video recording	APS-C	24.1	Canon M	25,600	3840		143	6.1	-	-	-	3	-	315	108.2	67.1	35.1	299
Canon EOS M50	£649	4.5 ★	Very likeable and well-specified entry-level model with viewfinder	APS-C	24.2	Canon M	51,200	3840	-	143	10	-	-	-	3	-	235	116.3	88.1	58.7	387
Canon EOS M50 Mark II	£699	4 ★	Minor update to M50 with eye-detect AF and slightly longer battery life	APS-C	24.2	Canon M	51,200	3840	-	143	10	-	-	-	3	-	250	116.3	88.1	58.7	387
Canon EOS M6 Mark II	£869	4 ★	Sports 32.5MP sensor and 14fps shooting, uses removable viewfinder	APS-C	32.5	Canon M	51,200	3840	-	143	14	-	-	-	3	-	305	119.6	70	49.2	398
Canon EOS RP	£1400	4 ★	Compact and affordable but over-simplified full-frame camera ever	FF	26.2	Canon RF	102,400	3840	-	4778	5	-	-	-	3	-	250	132.5	85	70	485
Canon EOS R	£2350	4 ★	Canon's first full-frame mirrorless uses the EOS 5D Mark IV's sensor	FF	30.3	Canon RF	102,400	3840	-	5655	5	-	-	-	3.2	-	350	135.8	98.3	84.4	660
Canon EOS R6	£2500	5 ★	Superb all-rounder with in-body stabilisation and dual card slots	FF	20.1	Canon RF	204,800	3840	-	5072	12	-	-	-	3	-	380	138.4	97.5	88.4	680
Canon EOS R5	£4200	4.5 ★	Remarkable 45MP powerhouse capable of internal 8K video recording	FF	45	Canon RF	102,400	4096	-	5940	12	-	-	-	3.2	-	320	135.8	97.5	88	738
Fujifilm X-A7	£699	3 ★	Sports large fully articulated LCD, but frustrating controls	APS-C	24.2	Fuji X	51,200	3840	-	425	6	-	-	-	3.5	-	270	119	67.7	41.1	320
Fujifilm X-E4	£799	4 ★	Sharply-styled, compact mirrorless model with a tilt-up selfie screen	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	3840	-	425	20	-	-	-	3	-	460	121.3	72.9	32.7	364
Fujifilm X-Pro3	£1799	4 ★	Employs unusual hidden rear LCD design that polarises opinions	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	4096	-	425	20	-	-	-	3	-	370	140.5	82.8	46.1	497
Fujifilm X-S10	£949	5 ★	Fine SLR-styled model with in-body image stabilisation and large handgrip	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	3840	-	425	20	-	-	-	3	-	325	126	85.1	65.4	465
Fujifilm X-T200	£749	3.5 ★	Fine handling and great image quality, but slow and buggy in use	APS-C	24.2	Fuji X	51,200	3840	-	425	8	-	-	-	3.5	-	270	121	83.7	55.1	370
Fujifilm X-T30	£849	5 ★	Superb mid-range model that borrows much of its tech from the X-T3	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	3840	-	425	8	-	-	-	3	-	380	118.4	82.8	46.8	383
Fujifilm X-T3	£1349	5 ★	New sensor and improved autofocus make it the best APS-C camera yet	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	4096	-	425	20	-	-	-	3	-	390	132.5	92.8	58.8	539
Fujifilm X-T4	£1549	5 ★	Exciting update with in-body stabilisation and fully articulated screen	APS-C	26.1	Fuji X	51,200	4096	-	425	20	-	-	-	3	-	500	134.6	92.8	63.8	607
Leica CL	£2250	4.5 ★	Gorgeous APS-C mirrorless model with viewfinder and touchscreen	APS-C	24.2	Leica L	50,000	3840	-	49	10	-	-	-	3	-	220	131	78	45	403
Leica TL2	£1700	4 ★	Update to the TL with 24MP sensor and much faster operation	APS-C	24	Leica L	50,000	3840	-	49	20	-	-	-	3.7	-	250	134	69	33	399
Leica SL2	£5300	4 ★	Sports 47.3MP full-frame sensor, in-body stabilisation and 5K video	FF	47.3	Leica L	50,000	5120	-	225	20	-	-	-	3.2	-	370	147	107	83	916
Leica SL2-S	£3975	4 ★	More affordable 24MP version of the SL2 with pro video features	FF	24.6	Leica L	100,000	4096	-	225	25	-	-	-	3.2	-	510	146	107	83	931
Nikon Z 5	£1719	4 ★	Simplified version of the Z 6, comes with compact 24-50mm f/4-6.3 zoom	FF	24.3	Nikon Z	102,400	3840	-	273	4.5	-	-	-	3.2	-	470	134	100.5	69.5	675
Nikon Z 6	£2099	5 ★	Full-frame mirrorless all-rounder with 24MP sensor and 12fps shooting	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	-	273	12	-	-	-	3.2	-	330	134	100.5	67.5	675
Nikon Z 6ii	£1999	4.5 ★	Second-generation full-frame mirrorless model with useful updates	FF	24.5	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	-	273	14	-	-	-	3.2	-	410	134	100.5	69.5	705
Nikon Z 7	£3399	5 ★	High-resolution full-frame mirrorless with in-body stabilisation	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	3840	-	493	9	-	-	-	3.2	-	330	134	100.5	67.5	675
Nikon Z 7ii	£2999	4.5 ★	Gains dual card slots, faster shooting, 4K 60p video and vertical grip option	FF	45.7	Nikon Z	102,400	3840	-	493	10	-	-	-	3.2	-	420	134	100.5	69.5	705
Nikon Z 50	£849	5 ★	Well-specified APS-C mirrorless model boasts excellent handling	DX	20.9	Nikon Z	204,800	3840	-	209	11	-	-	-	3.2	-	320	126.5	93.5	60	450
Olympus PEN E-PL10	£599		Entry-level model with built-in flash and 4K video but no viewfinder	4/3	16.1	Mic/4/3	25,600	3840		121	8.6	-	-	-	3	-	350	117.1	68	39	380
Olympus OM-D E-M10 III	£699	4.5 ★	Excellent entry-level OM-D with simplified, easy-to-use interface	4/3	16.1	Mic/4/3	25,600	3840		121	8.6	-	-	-	3	-	330	121.5	83.6	49.5	410
Olympus OM-D E-M10 IV	£699	4.5 ★	Compact, lightweight, enjoyable to use and takes great-looking pictures	4/3	20.2	Mic/4/3	25,600	3840		121	15	-	-	-	3	-	360	121.7	84.4	49	383
Olympus OM-D E-M5 III	£1100	5 ★	Very capable camera with a small, lightweight, weather-sealed body	4/3	20.4	Mic/4/3	25,600	4096		121	10	-	-	-	3	-	310	125.3	85.2	49.7	414
Olympus OM-D E-M1 II	£1850	5 ★	Superb AF system, super-fast shooting and remarkable in-body IS	4/3	20.4	Mic/4/3	25,600	3840		121	60	-	-	-	3	-	440	134.1	90.9	68.9	574

We've tried our hardest to ensure that the information in this guide is as complete and accurate as possible. However, some errors will inevitably have crept in along the way: if you spot one, please let us know by emailing ap.ed@kelsey.co.uk. Unfortunately we don't have space to list every single product on the market, so we don't include the most expensive speciality items. **Before making a purchase we advise you to check prices, along with any crucial specifications or requirements, with either a reputable retailer or the manufacturer's website.**



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DSLR cameras				SENSOR SIZE	RESOLUTION (MP)	LENS MOUNT	MAKES	VIDEO	AUD. INPUT	AF POINTS	FASTEST SHUT (1/8000)	ISO RANGE (ISO)	ISO RANGE (1/8000)	FLASH	SCREEN SIZE (in)	ARTICULATED LCD	BATTERY LIFE (SHOTS)	WIDTH (mm)	HEIGHT (mm)	DEPTH (mm)	WEIGHT (g)
NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY												SHOOTING	SCREEN					DIMENSIONS
Canon EOS 2000D	£469	3★	Minor update to EOS 1300D gains 24.1MP sensor	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	12,800	1080		9	3	95	-	-	3		500	129	101.3	77.6	475
Canon EOS 4000D	£369	2.5★	Super-cheap stripped-back DSLR for budget-conscious beginners	APS-C	18	Canon EF	12,800	1080		9	3	95	-	-	2.7		500	129	101.6	77.1	436
Canon EOS 250D	£530	4★	Very compact entry-level DSLR with fully articulated screen and 4K video	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	51,200	3840	-	9	5	95	-	-	3	-	1070	122.4	92.6	69.8	449
Canon EOS 850D	£820	4★	Fully featured upper entry-level DSLR includes 4K video recording	APS-C	24.1	Canon EF	51,200	3840	-	45	7	95	-	-	3	-	800	131	102.6	76.2	515
Canon EOS 90D	£1210	4★	Mid-range DSLR boasts 32.5MP sensor, 10fps shooting and 4K video	APS-C	32.5	Canon EF	51,200	3840	-	45	10	100	-	-	3	-	1300	140.7	104.8	76.8	701
Canon EOS 6D Mark II	£1999	4.5★	Includes 26.2MP full-frame sensor and fully articulated screen	FF	26.2	Canon EF	102,400	1080	-	45	6.5	98	-	-	3	-	1,200	144	110.5	74.8	765
Canon EOS 5D Mark IV	£3599	4.5★	Hugely accomplished workhorse model, but pricey	FF	30.4	Canon EF	102,400	3840	-	61	7	7	100	-	3.2	-	900	151	116	76	890
Canon EOS-1D X Mark III	£6499		Super-fast pro model for sports and action photographers	FF	20.1	Canon EF	819,200	5496	-	191	16	100	-	-	3.2	-	2,850	158	167.6	82.6	1440
Nikon D3500	£499	4★	Easy-to-use entry-level DSLR with Bluetooth connectivity	DX	24.2	Nikon F	25,600	1080		11	5	95	-	-	3		1,550	124	97	69.5	415
Nikon D5600	£800	4.5★	Excellent image quality and handling, plus Bluetooth connectivity	DX	24.1	Nikon F	25,600	1080	-	39	5	95	-	-	3.2	-	970	124	97	78	465
Nikon D7500	£1299	4.5★	Places the excellent sensor from the D500 into a smaller body	DX	20.9	Nikon F	1,640,000	3840	-	51	8	100	-	-	3.2	-	950	135.5	104	72.5	720
Nikon D500	£1729	5★	Probably the best DX-format DSLR ever, with remarkable autofocus	DX	20.9	Nikon F	1,640,000	3840	-	153	10	100	-	-	3.2	-	1,240	147	115	81	860
Nikon D750	£1800	5★	Great all-round enthusiast full-frame model with tilting screen	FX	24.3	Nikon F	51,200	1080	-	51	6.5	100	-	-	3.2	-	1,230	140.5	113	78	840
Nikon D780	£2199	5★	Superb all-rounder blends the best of DSLR and mirrorless technology	FX	24.5	Nikon F	204,800	3840	-	51	7	100	-	-	3.2	-	2,060	143.5	115.5	76	840
Nikon D850	£3499	5★	High speed and superb image quality make this the best DSLR yet	FX	45.7	Nikon F	102,400	3840	-	153	7	100	-	-	3.2	-	1,840	146	124	78.5	1005
Nikon D5	£5199		Nikon's top-end sports and action model for professionals	FX	20.8	Nikon F	3,280,000	3840	-	153	14	100	-	-	3.2	-	3,780	160	158.5	92	1405
Nikon D6	£6299		Latest pro-level high-speed sports camera boasts new AF system	FX	20.8	Nikon F	3,280,000	3840	-	105	14	100	-	-	3.2	-	3,580	160	163	92	1450
Pentax K-70	£600	4.5★	Solid performer with fully articulated screen and in-body stabilisation	APS-C	24.2	Pentax K	102,400	1080		11	6	100	-	-	3	-	410	125.5	93	74	688
Pentax KP	£1099	4★	Compact but well-specified DSLR with interchangeable hand-grips	APS-C	24.3	Pentax K	819,200	1080	-	27	7	100	-	-	3	-	390	131.5	101	76	703
NEW Pentax K-3 III	£1899		Highly specified but pricey APS-C DSLR that boasts a large viewfinder	APS-C	25.7	Pentax K	1,600,000	3840	-	101	12	100	-	-	3.2	-	800	134.5	103.5	73.5	820
Pentax K-1 II	£1799	4.5★	Well-featured full-frame DSLR that's excellent value for money	FF	36	Pentax K	819,200	1080	-	33	4.4	100	-	-	3.2	-	670	136.5	110	85.5	1010
Sigma SD Quattro	£850	3★	SD-mount mirrorless camera with unique Foveon X3 sensor	APS-C	19.6	Sigma SD	6400	-	-	9	3.6	100	-	-	3		N/A	147	95.1	90.8	703
Sigma SD Quattro H	£1499		Physically identical body to SD Quattro, but with larger APS-H sensor	APS-H	25.7	Sigma SD	6400	-	-	9	3.8	100	-	-	3		N/A	147	95.1	90.8	708

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Compact cameras

NAME & MODEL	RRP	SCORE	SUMMARY							SHOOTING			SCREEN			DIMENSIONS				
Canon G1 X Mark III	£1149	5 ★	Rewrites the rule book by fitting an APS-C sensor in a compact body	APS-C	24.2	24-72	25,600	1080	-	9	-	-	-	3in	-	200	115	77.9	51.4	399
Canon G3 X	£799	3.5 ★	Long zoom range, but let down by slow shooting and no built-in EVF	1in	20.2	24-600	12,800	1080	-	5.9	-	-	-	3.2in	-	300	123.3	76.5	105.3	733
Canon G5 X	£599	5 ★	Useful large-aperture f/1.8-2.8 zoom in a well-designed SLR-like body	1in	20.2	24-100	12,800	1080	-	5.9	-	-	-	3in	-	210	112.4	76.4	44.2	377
Canon G5 X Mark II	£849	4 ★	Handles well and gives great image quality, but sluggish AF in low light	1in	20.2	24-120	25,600	3840	-	30	-	-	-	3in	-	230	110.9	60.9	46	340
Canon G7 X Mark II	£549	4.5 ★	Pocketable body that handles well, with really useful zoom range	1in	20.1	24-100	12,800	1080	-	8	-	-	-	3in	-	265	105.5	60.9	42	319
Canon G7 X Mark III	£699	4 ★	Lovely pocket camera that includes 4K video and YouTube live streaming	1in	20.1	24-100	25,600	3840	-	30	-	-	-	3in	-	265	105.5	60.9	41.4	304
Canon G9 X Mark II	£449	4 ★	Slim, stylish, pocketable camera gives great image quality	1in	20.2	28-84	12,800	1080	-	8.2	-	-	-	3in	-	235	98	57.9	30.8	206
Fujifilm XF10	£449	3.5 ★	Small, attractive APS-C compact, slightly let down by sluggish AF	APS-C	24.2	28	51,200	3840	-	6	-	-	-	3in	-	330	112.5	64.4	41	279
Fujifilm X100V	£1999	5 ★	Replaces the X100F with new lens, tilting screen and weather-sealing	APS-C	26.1	35	51,200	3840	-	20	-	-	-	3in	-	420	128	74.8	53.3	478
Leica C-Lux	£875		Customised, re-badged version of the Panasonic TZ200	1in	20.1	24-360	25,000	3840	-	10	-	-	-	3in	-	370	113	67	46	340
Leica D-Lux 7	£1075		Customised, re-badged version of the Panasonic LX100 II	4/3	17	24-75	25,000	3840	-	11	-	-	-	3in	-	340	118	66	64	392
Leica V-Lux 5	£1049		Customised, re-badged version of the Panasonic FZ1000 II	1in	20.1	25-400	25,000	3840	-	12	-	-	-	3in	-	440	136.7	97.2	131.5	812
Leica Q	£3500	5 ★	Stunning full-frame compact boasts optically-stabilised f/1.8 lens	FF	24.2	28	50,000	1080	-	10	-	-	-	3in	-	N/A	130	80	93	640
Leica Q2	£4250		Update to the Q with high-resolution sensor and weather-sealed body	FF	47.3	28	50,000	4096	-	20	-	-	-	3in	-	350	130	80	91.9	718
Leica Q2 Monochrom	£4995	5 ★	Variant of the Q2 with a modified sensor that only shoots in black & white	FF	47.3	28	100,000	4096	-	20	-	-	-	3in	-	350	130	80	91.9	734
Panasonic FZ1000 II	£700	4 ★	Updates FZ1000 with higher-resolution, touch-sensitive screen	1in	20.1	25-400	25,600	3840	-	12	-	-	-	3in	-	440	136.2	97.2	131.5	810
Panasonic FZ2000	£600	4.5 ★	Sophisticated bridge camera with strong focus on 4K video	1in	20.1	24-480	25,600	3840	-	12	-	-	-	3in	-	350	137.6	101.9	134.7	966
Panasonic LX15	£370	4.5 ★	Likeable advanced compact with ultra-fast f/1.4-2.8 zoom lens	1in	20.1	24-72	25,600	3840	-	10	-	-	-	3in	-	260	105.5	60	42	310
Panasonic LX100	£400	5 ★	Engaging camera, but rather low resolution by current standards	4/3	12.8	24-75	25,600	3840	-	11	-	-	-	3in	-	300	114.8	62	55	393
Panasonic LX100 II	£600	4.5 ★	Fine camera with Four Thirds sensor, fast lens and analogue controls	4/3	17	24-75	25,600	3840	-	11	-	-	-	3in	-	340	115	66.2	64.2	392
Panasonic TZ100	£350	4.5 ★	Long zoom lens in pocket-sized body makes for a fine travel camera	1in	20.1	25-250	25,600	3840	-	10	-	-	-	3in	-	300	110.5	64.5	44.3	312
Panasonic TZ200	£500	4.5 ★	Huge zoom range for a pocket camera, but telephoto images lack detail	1in	20.1	24-360	25,600	3840	-	10	-	-	-	3in	-	370	111.2	66.4	45.2	340
Ricoh GR II	£549		Fine pocket camera, but showing its age in terms of specifications	APS-C	16.2	28	25,600	1920	-	4	-	-	-	3in	-	320	117	62.8	34.7	251
Ricoh GR III	£799	4 ★	Streamline, lightweight advanced compact with in-body image stabilisation	APS-C	24.2	28	102,400	1920	-	4	-	-	-	3in	-	200	109.4	61.9	33.2	257
Sigma dp0 Quattro	£899	3.5 ★	One of four cameras with the same body design but different lenses	APS-C	19.5	21	6,400	-	-	3.5	-	-	-	3in	-	200	161.4	67	126	550
Sigma dp1 Quattro	£899		Oddly-shaped body, but logical control layout and clear user interface	APS-C	19.5	28	6,400	-	-	3.5	-	-	-	3in	-	200	161.4	67	87.1	475
Sigma dp2 Quattro	£899	3.5 ★	Sports an excellent lens designed specifically for the Foveon sensor	APS-C	19.5	45	6,400	-	-	3.5	-	-	-	3in	-	200	161.4	67	81.6	460
Sigma dp3 Quattro	£899		The Foveon sensor is excellent at low ISO but poor above ISO 800	APS-C	19.5	75	6,400	-	-	3.5	-	-	-	3in	-	200	161.4	67	101.8	515
Sony RX0 II	£730		Updated RX0 with tilting screen and internal 4K video recording	1in	15.3	24	12,800	3840	-	16	-	-	-	1.5in	-	240	59	40.5	35	132
Sony RX1R II	£3450	5 ★	Fabulous full-frame compact with f/2 lens and pop-up viewfinder	FF	42.4	35	102,400	1920	-	5	-	-	-	3in	-	220	113.3	65.4	72	507
Sony RX10	£829	5 ★	Excellent bridge camera with constant f/2.8 zoom lens	1in	20.2	24-200	12,800	1920	-	10	-	-	-	3in	-	420	129	88.1	102.2	813
Sony RX10 II	£1200	5 ★	Stacked CMOS sensor enables faster shooting and 4K video	1in	20.2	24-200	12,800	3840	-	14	-	-	-	3in	-	400	129	88.1	102.2	813
Sony RX10 III	£1400	5 ★	Much longer zoom than previous RX10 models, but also much larger	1in	20.1	24-600	12,800	3840	-	14	-	-	-	3in	-	420	132.5	94	144	1095
Sony RX10 IV	£1800	5 ★	Update to RX10 III with vastly improved shooting speed and autofocus	1in	20.1	24-600	12,800	3840	-	24	-	-	-	3in	-	400	132.5	94	144	1095
Sony RX100	£399	5 ★	The original 1in sensor compact now looks outdated in terms of features	1in	20.2	28-100	12,800	1920	-	10	-	-	-	3in	-	330	101.6	58.1	35.9	240
Sony RX100 III	£810	5 ★	Features fast f/1.8-2.8 zoom lens and pop-up electronic viewfinder	1in	20.1	24-70	12,800	1920	-	10	-	-	-	3in	-	320	101.6	58.1	41	290
Sony RX100 IV	£896	4.5 ★	Improves on III with higher-resolution EVF, faster shooting and 4K video	1in	20.1	24-70	12,800	3840	-	16	-	-	-	3in	-	280	101.6	58.1	41	298
Sony RX100 V	£900	4.5 ★	Includes super-fast 24fps shooting and slow-motion video up to 960fps	1in	20.1	24-70	12,800	3840	-	24	-	-	-	3in	-	220	101.6	58.1	41	299
Sony RX100 VI	£980	4.5 ★	Fantastic pocket travel camera with 24-200mm equivalent f/2.8-4 lens	1in	20.1	24-200	12,800	3840	-	24	-	-	-	3in	-	240	101.6	58.1	42.8	301
Sony RX100 VII	£1200	4.5 ★	Gains Sony's latest AI-based autofocus tech, including real-time eye AF	1in	20.1	24-200	12,800	3840	-	20	-	-	-	3in	-	260	101.6	58.1	42.8	302
Sony ZV-1	£700	4 ★	Designed for vloggers, with high-spec mic and fully articulated screen	1in	20.1	25-70	12,800	3840	-	24	-	-	-	3in	-	260	105.5	60	43.5	294

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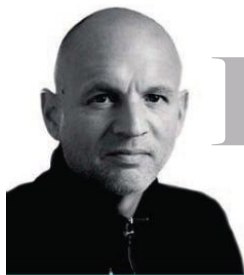
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Final Analysis

Benedict Brain considers... 'Biker Practising Yoga in Kensington Gardens, London', 1976, by Patrick Ward

I first saw 'Biker Practising Yoga' in a workshop run by the photographer Olivier Richon when I was studying photography at the Derby School of Art in the late '80s. The workshop was about narrative and storytelling. It was probably a fairly conceptual workshop. This image (see right) and indeed the whole workshop left an indelible stamp on me and in one form or another has informed my personal practice ever since. However, I wasn't the most diligent student and failed to take proper note of the photograph or who had taken it. Sorry, Patrick. Nonetheless, the image stayed in my mind and I had tried several times to find it and the name of the photographer without success.

So you can imagine my excitement when several decades later Ward's book, *Being English*, arrived on my desk for review. There it was on the cover – 'Biker Practising Yoga'! It's easy to see why my tutor, Olivier Richon, would have used this image to illustrate a point in his workshop about narrative, and in this regard, the image needs little explanation. Of course, the first impression when 'reading' this photo is one of puzzlement, what the heck has just happened? It really has stood the test of time and I still look at it with a joyful delight. It is fun, humorous, quirky and completely unstaged and perhaps speaks to an essence of Englishness that resonates with me.

Despite the conceptual roots



'Ward has recorded the traditions and eccentricities that define England and the essence of Englishness'

of the workshop I was attending at Derby, Ward's approach was delightfully straightforward: 'For me, it was simply about seeing the humorous connection between the man and his machine,' explains Patrick, who continues... 'and then running fast to find the shooting place and the composition that best captured that moment, already caught in my mind's eye.'

Ward, like many photographers of his generation, was inspired by the

seminal book, *The Family of Man*. After a period of study, he became an assistant to John Chillingworth of the *Picture Post*, and a couple of years later went freelance shooting for magazines such as *The Sunday Times* and the *Observer*.

Although on assignment in exotic parts of the world for the colour supplements, Ward also embarked on what would become a life-long project photographing the English at play. This project, which is shot in both black & white and

colour, culminated in the book, *Being English*. There is a playfulness that weaves its way through Ward's book. The work reveals a wonderful insight into Englishness and over the five decades Ward has recorded the traditions and weird eccentricities that define England and the essence of Englishness, and there are few other images that reveal this to me more than 'Biker Practising Yoga'.



www.patrickwardphoto.com

Benedict Brain, a photographer and award-winning journalist, combines his personal practice with writing about photography and leading workshops. Regularly asked to judge competitions such as the BPA and LPOTY he travels internationally as a public speaker talking about the art and craft of photography. He sits on the distinctions panel for the RPS. www.benedictbrain.com



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