

# PictureMaker



Mashonaland Photographic Society



2023 Issue 2  
February

*Inmate From a Tiny World...*



*Cover image: "Lady Bug Twist"*

*By Chris Collyer*



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### Monthly meeting:

29 Mar 2023 at 6pm

**Venue: Meditation Centre**

**# 6 Borrowdale Lane,**

**Opposite Borrowdale Trauma Centre**

**ANNUAL SUBS 2023** are due  
\$25 per member payable at the  
next meeting, if you haven't al-  
ready paid

**Set Subject: April 2023**

**Sunbursts or Streetlight  
Burst**

In colour, manipulation allowed

Deadline: Mon 3rd April

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## Editor's Blurp:

**Bridget Henderson**



February's set subject was primarily a macro task. This genre is fun to explore because there is always something to photograph, regardless of time of day or location. There is hidden detail everywhere, you just have to open your eyes and viewfinder! Macro photography presents quite a few challenges though: depth of field is usually very narrow with highly magnified glass and wide aperture; sharpness has to be perfect as every little blur is visible; lighting is critical and composition is tricky as many macro images can be flat and I hesitate to add lifeless (pun intended!).

Enter the topic of "ethics in photography"... ooooh, this is a hot potato, much like plastic surgery to the aging woman! There are many angles to consider and opinions to ponder. Purists would argue that one should refrain from cutting/plucking even a single leaf as a solitary leaf could be the essential cover for an insect against predators. Extremists, on the other hand, would see no harm in gluing insect bodies to a set for that 'perfect' photograph. Electron microscope shots of an insect's eye and extreme macro stacked shots will have been done on lifeless subjects in the majority. The reality is, we have a very different perception of 'creepy crawlies' compared to more attractive and appealing feathered and furred animals. So then is photographing an animal in a zoo or an emu's eye at "Birds on 30" unethical too? So where do we draw the line? This is a very personal decision and whilst I do not condone extreme unethical methods, I have to admit to a bit of staged photography myself. Stopping to think about my impact on the subject instead of pursuing the "perfect" shot has precipitated this writing. Hence going forward I will adopt the Royal Photographic Society guidelines of "For cold-blooded animals and invertebrates, temporary removal from the wild to a studio or vivarium (or aquarium) for photography is not recommended, where practicable field photographs are to be preferred. If a subject is removed from the wild for photography it should be released as soon as possible in its original habitat." Obviously shooting subjects *in situ* provides much more valuable authentic information when presented in its natural state.

The rules for ethical conduct can perhaps best be encapsulated in the following quotes: "Take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints, kill nothing but time" and "There is one hard and fast rule, whose spirit must be observed at all times. The welfare of the subject is more important than the photograph."

Our guest showcase this month is a long-standing member of MPS, being Chris Collyer. Chris has a very impressive and extensive library of macro images, and has recently published a book of his material. To this end I thought we should hero our own and give Chris some well-deserved recognition.

Also included in this edition is a review of the Canon EOS R7 by Chris Sheppard. There has been much discussion of the pros and cons of moving to a mirrorless system within the club so this is some fodder to munch on. Thank you for sharing this Chris. It is noted that not all members of our club are Canon users so any feedback, articles or material from other brand sources is also most welcome for this forum.

Enjoy!

**Erratum:** My sincere apologies go to Jim Dryburgh for mis-spelling his name in the January 2023 PictureMaker edition. Not a good start for my first foray as editor!

## From the President's Viewfinder – February 2023



So here I am awaiting a new day in Meonstoke, Hampshire, UK mulling over my activities these past three weeks. It's been a follow on to my trip in January, settling my sister into a care home in Malta but more so travelling over to France to pack up her late husband's estate which included a house, car and barge. Not something for the faint hearted nor something I recommend, especially when nearly everything hadn't seen the light of day for years and thirty years of French dust didn't help the cough which I had picked up on the way over from England.

I don't intend to dwell on how it went but rather on what I might term 'Photographic memoirs'. My late Brother-in-law passed away in his mid-eighties and had been an avid videographer and photographer all his life turning his hand to just about every facet of photography. Hence the challenge and what will bring me to my conclusion and later observation. The modern term is GAS – Gear Acquisition Syndrome but I'm not sure what it was termed previously – perhaps just collecting? Conservatively this is how it looked: 50 reels of 16mm film, 60 reels of 8mm film, 700 VHS tapes, boxes and boxes of 35mm film negatives, 100 cassettes of slides, memory sticks too numerous to count and innumerable laptops, notebooks, etc, with literally thousands of digital images. I won't even get into talking about his kit, all and everything from old to new but of very little value in Europe.

So what's my point? Who was going to benefit from these pictures or enjoy same? Nearly all these pictures and films had obviously been taken with the best of intentions but all came to the same, sad, sorry end in the skip. There was no way that I had time to view each and every picture, reel and no way to take them over to my sister. In the end I salvaged two big boxes of prints and I will do a sort through these in the coming days. What this exercise has done is to make me re-think my own photography and how I should manage what I have in my collection and where I should be focussed going forward. Maybe I'm not expressing this particularly well but the question exists, why are we taking all these pictures and for what end result or use. Should we continue to save all we take and ultimately leave it to one of our family to clear out just as I have been doing these past few days. Think about it. We all have vast collections of pictures, old and new. Do we keep them all? Should we be much more selective with our photography going forward? I know that I certainly will be.

Out of the blue I have had an invite to write an article for the South African Photographic Society magazine – Image. The request is to feature photography in Zimbabwe, with associated pictures, so will be soliciting ideas from members as to how best we can portray our beautiful country and what makes our photographers' 'tick'. Submission date is 1 July.

Our next photo evening is March 29<sup>th</sup> which will be ably steered by Chris Sheppard as I will be flying home that very day. Subs still need to be collected, so if you're in arrears please make good or otherwise you won't be able to enter the May Annual Competitions!

Our next monthly competition is listed as 'Sunburts or Streetlight Burst', colour with manipulation allowed. Get those creative juices flowing in time for the 3<sup>rd</sup> April close-off.

It's going to be a clear day so on that happy note I'll sign off.

Take care and enjoy your photography,

Nige



## Guest Showcase: Chris Collyer

Why Macro photography....?

Macro photography is all about showcasing a subject larger than it is in real life, an extreme close up of something really small.

In macro photography the world you know is gone, and a new one emerges. Revisualization is most important, learning to visualise what a good macro subject might be. A steady camera and the most pleasing depth of field together with movement-stopping power this is what I like to attain, because my favourite macro is more action orientated.

A bug taking off, wings a-spread, a quivering antenna just add some drama and extra elements. The only drawback is that you need a fairly expensive camera and lenses for example my Canon 7DMk2 and a 100mm 2.8 macro lens attached.

I have had reasonable results with cheaper bridge cameras but they are not salon quality but are fine for personal display.

Do not aim for a "Record Shot" because it is uninteresting. Your whole ambition should be to make people think "wow".

I want to get a picture that is not the same as everyone else.

The whole aim is to get extra elements in the photograph. What is the insect? What is it doing? What is it sitting on? What is the background and does it enhance the photograph?

A butterfly sitting on a bromeliad flower has so many additional features creating a pleasing image because it is so different.



*"White Barred Chiraxis"*

Backgrounds are very important – cluttered backgrounds are a distraction. I aim for an unobstructed backdrop, its simplicity adds to the image.

As always there are exceptions – you can use bokeh to be part of the picture, cluttered can be used to demonstrate camouflage, additional similar out of focus subjects can draw the viewers' attention to the main subject.



*Sometimes you need to use a “busy” background to highlight just how camouflaged the subject(s) is (are) as in the image left.*

I will go as far as to create a scenario where my subject is not simply stationary, but appears to be moving, relocating a subject where possible into a more captivating composition. Care must be taken with certain subjects, spiders for instance can be dangerous if not handled carefully.

A simple, well composed, iconic and attention-grabbing image will score well because the viewer will remain interested in it longer.

I like my pictures to look almost “post cardy” I like a bit of colour. Not over done otherwise it looks false.



*It is not always about insects – small and interesting can work. Colourful with a clean backdrop.*

General settings with my Canon EOS 7Dii and Canon EOS EF 100 Macro L 2.8 lens:

- \* Manual
- \* f/8
- \* 1/500th sec
- \* Sometimes use built in camera flash
- \* Handheld (often in the squatting position)
- \* Autofocus
- \* Automatic white balance
- \* JPEG only

Edited with Adobe Elements 12:

- Auto Sharpen
- Curves
- Contrast / saturation
- Exposure

*Chris Collyer*



## February 2023 MPS competition results

### *“Inmate from a Tiny World”*



#### **1st place SET SUBJECT**

**“Lichen Like”** Kerry Orphanides

Camera: Canon Powershot SX70 HS

ISO: 200

Aperture: f/5.6

Shutter speed: 1/200 sec

Focal length: 45.24 mm



#### **1st place OPEN CATEGORY**

**“Lavender’s Lure”** Suzanne Hoffman

Camera: Canon EOS 700D

ISO: 250

Lens: Canon EF 60mm f2.8

Aperture: f/5.6

Focal length: 60mm

Shutter speed: 1/320 sec

## February 2023 MPS competition results cont...

*“Inmate from a Tiny World”***2nd place SET SUBJECT****“Camouflage Hunter”****George Fleet**

Camera: Canon EOS R6  
Lens: Canon 100mm f2.8L Macro  
Focal length: 100mm  
ISO: 5000  
Aperture: f/11  
Shutter speed: 1/2000 sec

**2nd place OPEN****“Coral Blooms” Kerry Orphanides**

Camera: Canon Powershot SX70 HS      ISO: 320  
Aperture: f/5      Shutter speed: 1/125 sec  
Focal length: 18.45 mm



## February 2023 MPS competition results cont...

*“Inmate from a Tiny World”***3rd place SET SUBJECT****“Iridescent Individual”**      Bridget Henderson

Camera:	Canon EOS R 5	ISO:	100
Lens:	Canon EF 100mm f2.8L Macro	Aperture:	f/9
Focal length:	100mm	Shutter speed:	1/200 sec

**3rd place OPEN****“Cutting through the Water”**

Nettie Rogers

Camera:	Canon EOS 600 D
Lens:	Canon EF 55–200 mm f/4.5–5.6
Focal length:	200 mm
ISO:	500
Aperture:	f/5.6
Shutter speed:	1/640 sec



## Using the Canon EOS R7

*By Chris Sheppard, Mashonaland Photographic Society*

**26 February 2023**

What a revelation having this smaller, more compact unit to play with compared to my EOS 5D iv and 7D ii.

I have been watching social media and advertising expounding the mirrorless virtues and was very grateful to have the opportunity to actually try one out.

### First impressions

Very small

Light

Electronic viewfinder took some getting used to

Thumb controls although intuitive were a challenge for my big hands.

Much more on offer in-camera by way of choices as to what the camera could do

Tracking more concise

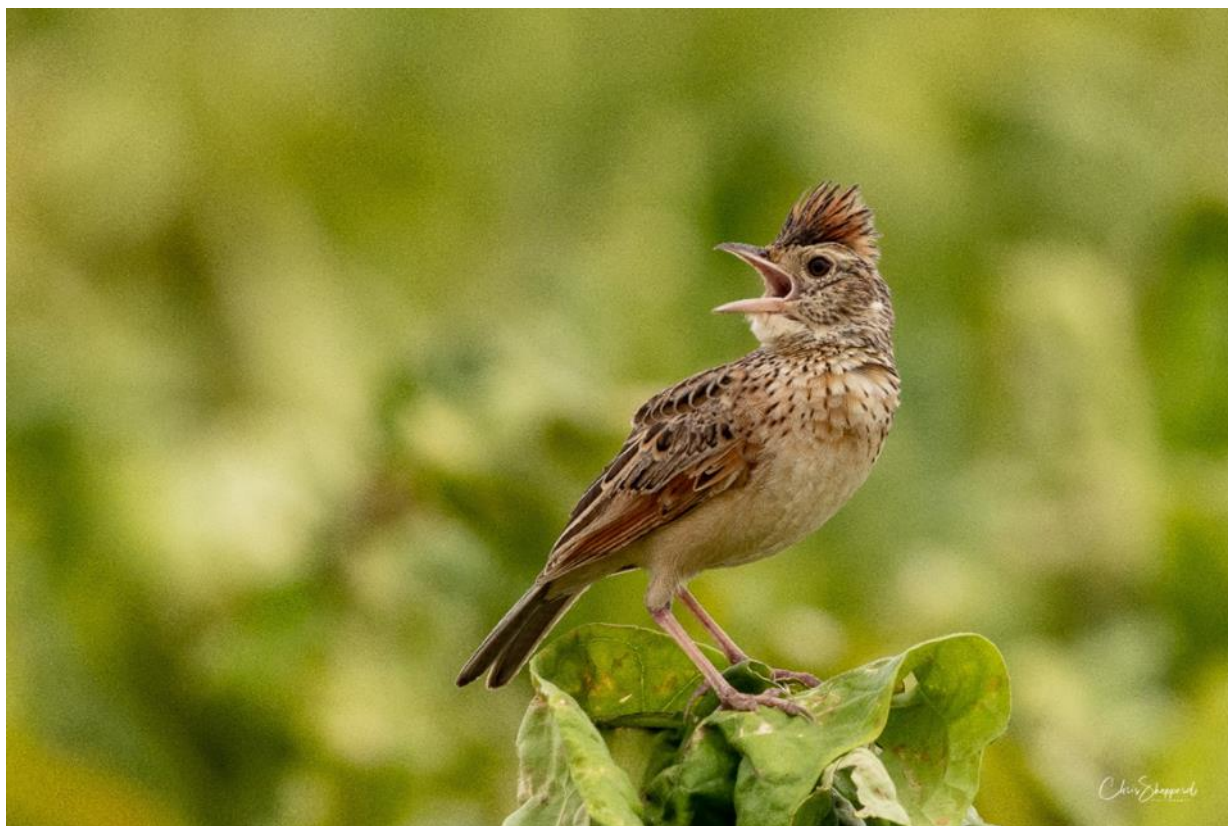
Silent shutter

Low light not as good as the 5D

Crop sensor reach much the same as 7D ii

I took the unit complete with kit lenses RF 18-150mm and 100-400mm zoom with me on my regular work. I deliberately left my usual gear behind. In doing this I had to think slightly different when viewing and capturing various subject matter.

I also brought my EF 100mm Macro unit which I used with the supplied adapter as a way of determining professional spec equipment with the slower supplied lenses.



### **"Happy as a Lark"**

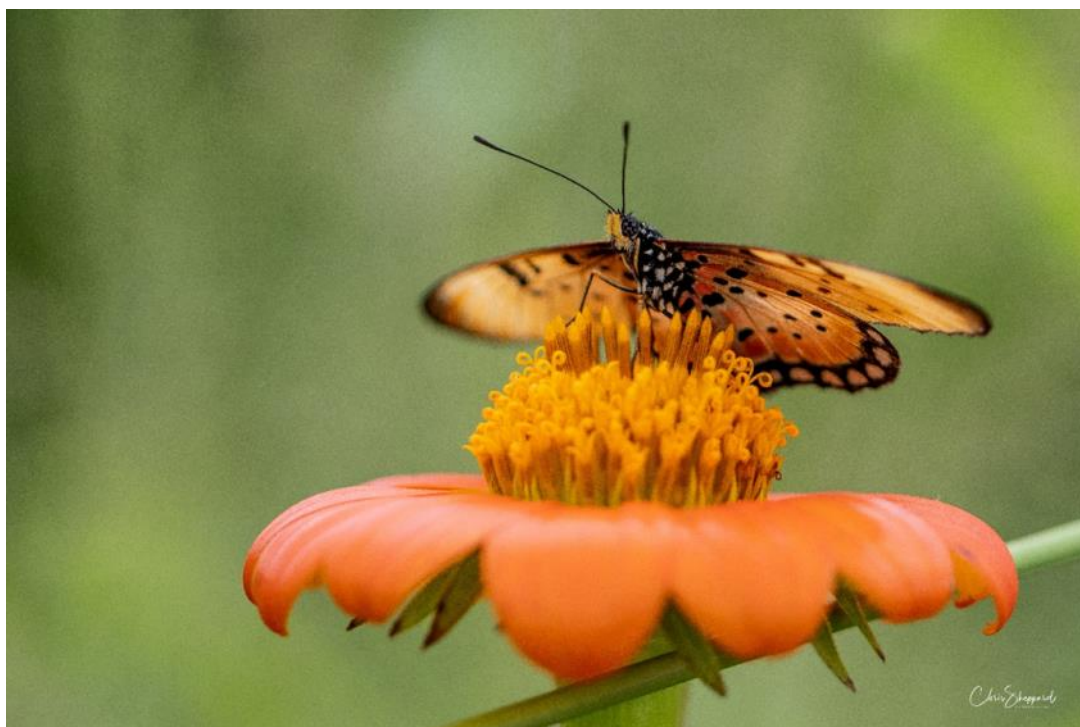
*Canon EOS R7, RF 100-400mm F5.6-8 IS USM*

*Focal length 100mm*

*1/800 sec. f/8. ISO 500 Aperture Priority*

Practical use

1. The electronic viewfinder took me longer to master than I had anticipated and was the most complicated part of learning to use this new offering.
  - When raising my DSLR to catch a scene or a moving object I had the chance, in a microsecond, to see my subject in frame almost before the camera's own tracking came alive.
  - The R7 seemed to take longer. This might have been my inexperience, but I found it difficult.
  - I tried to "start" the camera by depressing the shutter release as I picked the unit up, but could not have things operational as quick as I wanted.
  - It is a useful facility to be able to see playback images in the viewfinder, particularly in bright light.
  - I am confident enough in my skill level to anticipate what my image will look like without it being shown in viewfinder.
2. Controls were small, necessarily so, as the whole unit is relatively small.
  - I have big hands and it took some time to get used to them moving over dials without accidentally activating others.
  - I am also left eye dominant this created a cramped space between my right eye and the multi-controller on the top of the back face.
  - On the whole though I found the controls very intuitive and easy to use and I am sure if I had more time with the camera I would have worked my way around the little niggles.
3. Light sensitivity I felt was compromised by the kit lenses supplied.
  - Darkish images seemed to result more often than I planned. This might have been my inexperience with the camera and my instinctive choice of setting used for my 5D iv.
  - Using the EF 100mm Macro lens did not significantly change the light.
4. There are many image options within-camera, stacking, panorama etc. Being an iPhone user these did not challenge me.

**"Flower Power"**

Canon EOS R7  
EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro  
IS USM  
Focal length - 100mm  
1/320 sec.  
f/2.8.  
ISO 100  
Aperture Priority



5. Tracking was a big step up from both 5D iv and 7D ii.
  - I am sure more time and practice would have improved my skill level and the lenses perhaps were not as fast as more professional ones.
  - It was quite unnerving to see the tracking following a subject so proficiently and something that would make the camera an attractive purchase if I was a serious birder.
6. The Mirrorless “silent shutter” is a game changer.
  - Being able to take an image without alerting your subject is a huge leap in cameras.
  - You do have to be careful that you do not overdo the number of frames as this will significantly increase post processing time.



### ***“Missed”***

*Canon EOS R7, RF 100-500mm F4.5 - 7.1 L IS USM*

*Focal length 100mm*

*1/2500 sec. f/5.0. ISO 800. Shutter Priority. Subject Tracking*

### **Post processing**

This is something I need to do more of as I felt the R7 RAW images were “dirty” for want of another word. I use Lightroom for most of my editing and when looking at the images compared to my 5D iv they were harder to work with.

I do not have the technical expertise to explain why. Even when using the EF Macro lens, I still had to “work” with the image more than the other older cameras.

### **Would I buy the R7?**

Yes, absolutely. I would like to replace my EOS 7D ii.

#### **Pros:**

Extra reach  
Light  
Shutter speed  
Tracking

#### **Niggles:**

Controls are hard to access.  
Post processing  
Electronic viewfinder



### **“Tree, Road and Clouds”**

*Canon EOS R7.*

*RF18-150mm f3.5-6.3 IS STM.*

*Focal length - 18mm*

*1/400sec. f/8. ISO 100.*

*Aperture Priority*

## Sunbursts or Streetlight Burst

In colour, manipulation allowed

Deadline: Mon 3rd April

### How to Create Cool Starburst Effects in Photos

To capture a starburst effect in your photos, you will need a small, intense source of light and a small aperture. Anything from  $f/11$  to  $f/22$  will close the blades inside your lens to create a small opening. As light passes through this small gap it creates slight diffraction, allowing the camera's sensor to capture a starburst effect around a light.

#### How to Create a Starburst Effect During the Day:

The sun on a clear day will work but hazy or overcast conditions diffuses the source of light and makes it impossible to create this starburst effect. It is important to protect your camera's sensor: use a UV filter. Your main challenge during the day is that the sun can be too bright for the scene and will result in blown out highlights. Sunrise and set conditions are often more favourable for this effect. To control the amount of light in a scene you need to partially cover the sun with another object, such as a tree, mountain, building etc. This also amplifies the starburst effect.



#### How to Create a Starburst Effect at Night:

Starbursts around lights at night are easier to achieve than starbursts during the day. The principle is still the same: you will need to select a small aperture and have a bright intense source of light. At night, similarly, a bright light bulb will allow you to create a starburst effect whereas a diffuse fluorescent tube will not. Use of a tripod is a necessity at night.

Light sources at night such as streetlamps are not as intense as the sun and hence you don't need to partially cover them. Select a small aperture and as low an ISO as possible to avoid noise. Your shutter speed can be determined by your aperture and ISO. Because you will be using a tripod, long exposures will not be an issue. The other great thing about photographing at night is that you can have many starbursts in the same shot. A row of street lamps will all have a great starburst effect.



#### Composition:

A starburst by itself is not going to make a photo interesting. Starburst effects should be used as an extra composition tool.

Look at the entire photo and incorporate the starburst into it. At night you can combine starburst effects with things like light trails. Good luck trying to find a street with many lights working in Zimbabwe!







Macro photography requires a 1:1 magnification or more. This can be obtained with a dedicated 1:1 macro lens but sometimes more magnification is required. Specialist renowned lenses such as 2:1 or 2.5-5:1 Laowa Macro lenses start at about \$550 but there are other less expensive options out there to consider such as dioptres and extension tubes. Prices are approximate and are without import fees, transport etc to Zim.

### Dioptre:

A dioptre is a magnifying glass that screws or clips onto the end of the lens, reducing focal distance and increasing magnification. Dioptres are generally affordable but can end up degrading image quality. The depth of field is very shallow when using a dioptre so stacking may be necessary to get enough depth of focus in your image. It is quick and easy to attach and fun to use. Manual focus is the way to go when using a dioptre. The Raynox DCR-250 Macro Attachment is a decent one, gives +8 dioptres of magnification and is available on Amazon for about \$70.



### Extension tubes:

Extension tubes are essentially hollow tubes that fit between the sensor and the lens, the function of which is to move the lens further away from the sensor, which in turn reduces focal distance and increases magnification. There is no glass element in extension tubes so image quality is not degraded like it is with dioptres. Prices range from about \$15 for a set of 3 plastic 3rd party tubes (without contacts) to \$150 for an original name brand tube with electronic contacts, allowing autofocus, auto aperture control, and EXIF data. Depth of field is narrowed and loss of light need to be factored in, when using extension tubes.



### Diffuser:

A key element of a good macro image is lighting: by adding a layer of diffusion between the flash and subject, the flash light is softened and spread, resulting in less unsightly hotspots or overly darkened areas of shadow. This is particularly important when working with highly reflective bits like beetles' shells or jumping spiders' eyes.

A basic soft-box diffuser that affixes to your flash will help improve results. They are very affordable at around \$15 and attach easily with a Velcro strip.





