



IPIP Photographic Club

September 2024 Newsletter

Theme: COLD

Image By



Antje Higgs

Our thanks to the members who submitted contributions for the April newsletter. Once again may we emphasize that if you have any item of photographic interest - technical or otherwise - which you wish to share, then you are welcome to forward such material either to me at pdk.main@gmail.com or to the IPIP address Ed

Matters Arising from the September Club Meeting

A total of 22 members were present at our September meeting. We were also joined by 5 online members.

Presentation

Dave Wolstencroft presented an interesting talk on the technology and practice employed in producing top-level monochrome images. Dave's talk included a liberal number of specimen images and the hope was expressed that members would be able to take away those snippets which could aid in enhancing their own monochrome photographic endeavours.

Mini Congress

CHAIR sounded out the members on whether our Club should host the 2025 Central Gauteng Mini Congress. This would entail an intensive effort and will succeed only if ALL members contribute time and activity to the project.

Acceptance of the idea will be determined by a majority vote, via EMail

Salons

A number of members received acceptances in recent Salons and their work was showcased. Out of a total of 16 Four-Star IPIP photographers, only 5 members submit to Salons. CHAIR appealed for more members to submit on a regular basis.

Reminders

- Weekend Away at Wakkerstroom 25th to 27th April 2025
- PSSA Congress 30th September to 4th October at Woodlands Country Lodge, Parys
- Franconi Challenge due date is 31st October

Monochrome Images

It has been decided that in future, prizes would be awarded to the highest-scoring mono image in the 1-3 Star, 4 Star and 5 Star categories. The February 2025 set subject is "Monochrome".

Set Subjects

The Subject for October is TRAVEL, defined as "A photograph depicting travel, either the destination or the mode. May be a beach, an iconic scene, a suitcase and ticket or a train for example".

The subject for November is Farming, defined as "Explore the world of agriculture by photographing the daily life, work, and landscapes of farms, showcasing the agricultural process. Focus is on farming activities, landscapes, or farm life. No farm animals unless they form part of the landscape, activity or daily life".

Monochrome Submissions

In order to jog our collective memories, the following procedure for monochrome submission, is re-printed here:

Monthly submitted photos must include at least one monochrome image subject to the following guidelines:

1. Should you submit 2 set subject and 2 members challenge images, one must be monochrome.
2. Should you submit 4 colour, the image with the lowest score will be disqualified.
3. Should you submit 3, 2 or 1 images, there is no need to submit a monochrome image."

Outings and Events

The following venues/activities were suggested as potential outing events:

- Johannesburg Graffiti tour. See Group Chat for details
- Visit to the War Memorial at the Jhb Zoo
- The Heidelberg Great Train Race Saturday 28th September. See Facebook article for more details

Technical Feedback and Tutorials

Dudley Schnetler has submitted 2 thought-provoking articles, which are replicated below.

Judging Photographs

I came across an interesting definition of the various types of judging which could be applied to our photographs.

Social Media

The response here is in the form of likes and sharing, often by viewers who have no photographic knowledge, on a tiny screen.

Club Judging- This not judging in the strict sense of the word, but rather evaluation with the intention of providing teaching to the photographer and others. The score is the lesser element, the comments are where the real value lies.

Salon Judging- This is straightforward competition, with a rigorous sifting process to identify the top 20% or 25% which would be accepted into a salon exhibition.

PSSA Honours - This is a detailed examination by a panel of skilled photographers to determine whether the standard of work the photographer has produced is sufficient to be awarded an honour.

Photographers are often heard to comment that "my photo scored well in club judging, but poorly in a salon. Is our club judging too soft?"

The answer is no. In 2023 in IPIP Photographic Club we scored 70% of the 984 submitted images as gold, which is a fair reflection of the judging standard in a learning environment.

A salon scores 20% or 25% of images to be good enough to be accepted, which is the "pass mark" in a competition. So few club golds are going to be of salon acceptance standard.

Where to with Photography as we know it?

The invention of photography almost 200 years ago had a major impact on the art world.

A common practice amongst the wealthy was to have their portraits painted. Photography changed that for many people. One could have a photograph taken in a fraction of the time at a fraction of the cost. Suddenly having one's picture taken was available to all, and portrait painters or sketchers were a lot less in demand.

Painters responded by moving from the world of portraits, historical scenes and religious paintings to what was known rather disparagingly as impressionist art. This movement was led by artists such as Manet, Monet, Degas and Renoir, who produced the most exciting and colourful Avant Garde art.

This developed further in the 20th century, led by artists such as van Gogh, Picasso and Dali who ventured into cubism, surrealism and other art which involved the artist's vision and expression of ideas. Many artists also started painting everyday scenes of life among the lower classes, promoting a social message. Painted art today is very different from that of the past. It has become much more creative and expressive of the artist's ideas.

We could well see a repeat of this artistic transformation in the next few years, with the emergence of artificial intelligence commonly known as AI. AI can now produce documentary or realistic images better than most photographers, at a fraction of the cost.

So, the potential for AI to produce images of products, food or landscape views means that a lot of today's photography can be achieved without human photographers. What will we do? Try to hold back the tide or develop further into creative photography, where we produce images that require creative thinking and artistic input?

AI currently can interpret the ideas of others or scenes that have been produced before but does not apply creative thinking.

So, in thinking about IPIP photo topics for 2025, consider proposing those that may give us practice in growing our creative ability.

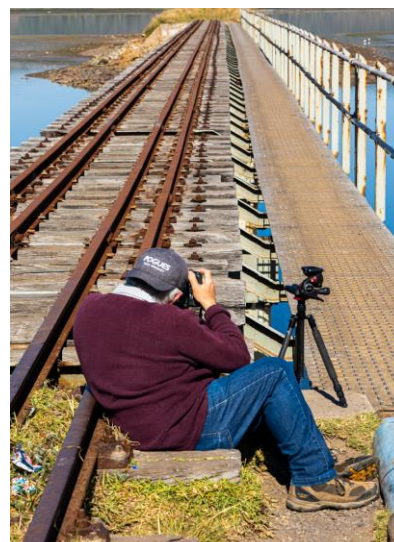
The judging requirements for the various star gradings currently move from mostly craft such as focus, exposure and some composition capability in the lower gradings, to displaying artistic merit, emotion and creativity in the higher gradings. This could become even more relevant in the future.

Members' Forum – Danger Men At Work

Recently, Dudley Schnetler and two fellow members - who shall forever remain nameless – enjoyed a break in the Knysna district. One morning when Dudley was taking his usual morning constitutional, he happened upon two very strange sights. Judge for yourself!



Is this a mud fetish ?



This man went completely off the rails

Members' Forum – 10 Tips for Amazing Natural Light Portrait Photography

A Post By: **Wayne Radford**

Lesly Kearns-Eastwick submitted the following interesting and informative article

Struggling to create beautiful natural light portrait photography? You're not alone. Capturing gorgeous portrait shots without strobes or continuous lights can be a real challenge. You have no ability to control your light source, and the weather can be unpredictable (even at the best of times).

That said, natural light can create absolutely *stunning* portraits; that's why it's a favorite of professional photographers. And while working with sunlight is often daunting, it's not quite as hard as you might think.

I'm a huge fan of natural light portraiture, and in this article, I share my 10 best tips to create stunning shots, including:

- The best type of natural light to produce soft, evenly lit images
- How to pick the right lighting direction (it's different than you might expect!)
- How to spice up your portraits with beautiful backgrounds
- Much more!

Ready to become a portrait lighting expert? Then let's dive right in, starting with my first tip:

1. Make sure you're shooting in the right light

Natural light works great for portrait photography, but if you want beautiful results, you need to understand the types of natural light to use – and the types of natural light to avoid.

Some types of light will create soft, beautifully lit portraits, while other types of light will produce harsh shadows, unpleasant highlights, and just an all-around bad effect.

I'd recommend working in open shade, which you can find under awnings, at the edges of trees or buildings, and inside doorways or windows. The idea here is to position your subject in an area that's shaded, but not *too* shaded. You want the soft, flattering effect that's produced by shade, but you don't want to work in heavy darkness.

I positioned these girls approximately 5 feet (1.5 meters) inside the doorway of an old timber shed:



You can also work in the evening, starting about an hour before sunset. The soft light of the setting sun will produce a beautiful golden glow, and you can often use careful side lighting or backlighting to create a gorgeous result.

Overcast light is also nice; the clouds will soften the sun's harsh rays, and you'll get wonderfully flattering shots.

However, avoid working on bright, clear days when the sun is high in the sky. This will cause harsh shadows, plus it will cause your subjects to squint!

Note that softer light does tend to be weaker, so it's important that you modify your camera settings accordingly to prevent blur due to camera shake (see the tips I share below!).

2. Pay attention to the direction of the light

Good-quality light is a solid starting point, but if you want to create great portraits, you need to pay attention not just to the quality of the light, but also to the light's direction

So if you're capturing outdoor portraits, look around and identify the position of the sun. Then keep it in mind *at all times* as you shoot. If you're capturing indoor portraits, identify your main source of light – generally a window – and think of it as your sun.

Next, position your subject and your camera in relation to the light source. There's no one right approach here, and it often helps to experiment with different positions. You might also consider learning about different studio lighting patterns, such as Rembrandt lighting, split lighting, and butterfly lighting.

Personally, I'm a fan of partial side lighting, when the light comes across your subject's face at approximately 45 degrees from the nose and approximately 45 degrees above the face. This produces a beautiful catchlight in the eyes, plus it gives nice shadows that increase the three-dimensionality of the image.

Here, my subject was lit from the upper left:



Portrait photographers tend to avoid front light – that is, light that comes from over the photographer's shoulder and hits the subject directly – because it causes the subject to squint, plus it flattens the image and robs it of depth.

But you can use backlight, especially when the sun is low in the sky, to create a beautiful result. Just position your subject so the sun is behind their head or over their shoulder, expose for the background, then boost the shadows in post-processing (or bring a reflector into the field).

You can also use true sidelight to create a dramatic natural light portrait. Position your subject so the sun hits them directly from the side, then watch as you get an intense, shadowy, split-lighting effect!

3. Use a reflector

In the previous tip, I mentioned that reflectors can be a handy way to brighten up heavy shadows on your subject. In fact, reflectors can make a *huge* difference in your images, which is why I'm dedicating an entire section to their value.

A reflector is basically any surface that reflects light, and while you can find natural reflectors (e.g., white walls, sandy beaches, and even shiny cars), pop-up reflectors designed specifically for photographers are extremely cheap and highly portable. (If you don't already own a reflector, I'd encourage you to buy one immediately!)

You don't always need to use a reflector when you're capturing portraits, but if you're shooting with backlight or shade – so your subject's face looks somewhat dark – or you're dealing with harsher light from a midday sun, it's a good idea to position that reflector in front of your subject and slightly below their chin. It'll add an extra pop of illumination and help dispel any unflattering shadows.

Note that by holding the reflector closer and farther from your subject, you'll achieve different effects. So make sure that you experiment with different distances until you achieve the look you're after!

4. Choose the right settings

The best settings for portrait photography vary depending on the scenario, and it's really important that you understand each and every setting offered by your camera – that way, no matter what happens, you'll always be prepared.

But there are a few settings that are especially fundamental to good portrait shooting, and I highly recommend you keep them in mind at all times.

First, you'll want to switch off Auto mode and make sure you're using Aperture Priority, Shutter Priority, or Manual. Aperture Priority is generally a good choice as it'll let you choose the aperture and ISO while your camera chooses the shutter speed.

Then choose a reasonably wide aperture, which will give you a narrower depth of field effect. This is the key to producing refined background bokeh.

Next, lower your ISO to around 100, then check your shutter speed. The goal here is to keep the shutter speed fast enough to prevent blur due to camera shake or subject movement; in most cases, 1/160s or so should be enough. Therefore, if your shutter speed is at 1/160s or faster, you're good to go. If your shutter speed is slower than 1/160s, you'll need to raise your ISO or widen your aperture farther to achieve a faster shutter speed.

Finally, make sure that you choose a good autofocus setting. If your camera offers eye-tracking AF, I recommend trying it out. Otherwise, working with some form of single-point AF can get the job done (just make sure you always focus on your subject's eyes).

5. Carefully choose the perfect background

If you can include the right background in your natural light portraits, it can dramatically elevate your shots. On the other hand, if you pick the wrong background or if you don't pay attention to the background when shooting, your photos are bound to turn out bland, boring, or just downright bad.

So once you find a location with solid light, be sure to look *behind* your subject before pressing the shutter button.

I like to avoid high-contrast backgrounds with a mix of sun and shade; in my experience, these can become distractions in the final image. I'd also recommend avoiding backgrounds with bright, distracting colors or lots of busy shapes.

Instead, look for areas that are uncluttered, low in contrast, and darker than the subject's face. That way, the subject's face will project forward, and the entire shot will appear very three-dimensional:



If you can find a background that complements the subject's clothing colors, even better!

And as you become more experienced, you'll be able to incorporate background bokeh into the scene. For the best results, use a wide lens aperture and a longer lens (e.g., 85mm). Also be sure to keep plenty of space between your subject and the backdrop – this will maximize background blur for pro-level results.

6. Make sure to include a catchlight

Catchlights refer to small spots of light that appear in the subject's eye:



And in portraiture, catchlights are *essential*. Catchlights add life to the shot, boost detail in the eyes, and enhance image depth. In my view, an image without a catchlight is hardly an image at all.

So how do you maintain a catchlight in your portraits?

First, make sure that you always include a bright light roughly in front of the subject, be it the sun, a patch of sky, or a reflector.

Second, before you take a photo, check your subject's eyes for that catchlight glimmer. And if you don't see one, ask them to turn or tilt their head until it appears.

Yes, it's basic, but it makes a *huge* difference. If you can get the catchlight right, then your photos will look so much better.

7. Keep poses simple but dynamic

If you're just starting out in portrait photography, you may be tempted to offer your subjects all sorts of fancy posing ideas.

But in my view, simple is generally better. A few tips:

1. Make sure your subject is looking at the camera.
2. Ask your subject to angle their shoulders at around 45 degrees.
3. If you're working with multiple subjects, ask them to lean their bodies and heads toward one another to create an emotional connection.
4. Ask your subject to point their noses subtly to the side (i.e., make sure the noses *don't* point directly at the camera).
5. Pose the arms and hands to avoid attention. Ask the subjects to bend their arms and clasp their hands together. Avoid open fingers and elbows bent at 90 degrees. If it bends, bend it – but naturally.

That way, you can create poses that look great *and* add plenty of flow.



8. Engage with your subject

Whether you're photographing indoors or outdoors, it's important that you don't just set up your camera, direct your subject in a pose, and start snapping away. Instead, make sure you start by conversing with your subject (and keep up that conversation throughout the shoot).

Why is this so essential? For one, if you develop rapport with your subject, they'll feel more comfortable in front of the camera, which will come through in your photos. They'll also do a better job of following your instructions – plus, the more you talk about their interests and preferences, the more they'll enjoy the experience.

If you don't feel like you can confidently maintain a conversation while shooting, I'd recommend coming up with a few potential topics in advance. Note that these can be very simple; you might ask your subject what they did the previous week, whether they have any upcoming vacations planned, or what they like to do in their spare time.

I'd also encourage you to praise your subject as you go. Whenever you take a nice shot or they strike a good pose, let them know; it'll do wonders for their confidence, and it'll lead to a far more successful photoshoot!

9. Shoot when the expression is best

Expression is *the* most important element in a natural light portrait. (In fact, a poorly lit and badly posed portrait with a beautiful expression will trump a technically perfect portrait with an average expression any day of the week.)

So if you can capture portraits with beautiful lighting, a beautiful pose, *and* a great expression, you'll be on top of the world.

I recommend directing your subjects, but carefully. Ask them to smile, ask them to laugh, ask them to look pensive, and so on – but don't force them to do expressions that make them feel uncomfortable, and if they don't like an expression, just move on. More emotional expressions tend to look better, but don't overdo it. You want mood, but you don't want dramatic overacting.



Also, make sure that *your* mood reflects the expression you're after. If you're jumping around with your camera, you won't get a soulful look; it just won't feel natural to the subject! Instead, act the expression you're looking for. Make sense?

10. Try capturing some silhouettes

Portrait silhouettes look amazing, and they're not too difficult to pull off, either. Here's what you do:

First, make sure you're photographing in the right light. You can use a window to create silhouettes if you're shooting indoors, but if you're outdoors, you'll generally need to wait until the sun is low in the sky.

Position your subject so the light source is behind them (in other words, the light should be shining toward the camera lens). It can be helpful to adjust your position until the sun (or window) is blocked by your subject or some other object (e.g., a tree).

Deliberately underexpose your subject. You can try adding several stops of negative exposure compensation, or you can force your camera's meter to select exposure values based on the bright light behind your subject.

Finally, take a photo or two, then check the result on your LCD. Make exposure adjustments as necessary, then shoot away!

Pro tip: Pay attention to the area behind your subject. The best silhouettes tend to feature unbroken edges – so be sure to change your position until you get a clean background.

The next meeting will be on 1st October, 18H00 for 18H30

Hope you enjoyed the September newsletter

HAPPY SHOOTING

IPIP PHOTOGRAPHIC CLUB

Set Subject Calendar for 2024

Month	Set Subject	Definition	SS Image Cut-off Date	MC Image Cut-off Date	Submission Date
October	Travel	A photograph depicting travel, either the destination or the mode. May be a beach, an iconic scene, a suitcase and ticket or a train for example.	1 st Sept 2023	1 st April 2024	21 st September 2024
November	Farming	Explore the world of agriculture by photographing the daily life, work, and landscapes of farms, showcasing the agricultural process. Focus is on farming activities, landscapes, or farm life. No farm animals unless they form part of the landscape, activity or daily life.	1 st October 2023	1 st May 2024	26 th October 2024

Members' Images – September 2024

Salon Acceptances

3rd Benoni Camera Club Digital Salon

<u>Category</u>	<u>Award</u>	<u>Photo Title</u>	<u>Photographer(+)</u>
Nature - Colour	Accepted	Snake portrait	Antje Higgo
Nature - Colour	Accepted	Spotted	Antje Higgo
Human Portraits - Colour	Accepted	Flick	Lesly Kearns-Eastwick
Open - Colour	Accepted	Window pose	Lesly Kearns-Eastwick
Open - Monochrome	Accepted	Time is hanging	Lesly Kearns-Eastwick
Open - Monochrome	Accepted	Shopping done	Lesly Kearns-Eastwick
Open - Monochrome	Accepted	Determined	Lesly Kearns-Eastwick
Scapes - Colour	Accepted	Strips of colour	Lesly Kearns-Eastwick
Scapes - Colour	Certificate of Merit	Tianjin Lights	Byron Kennedy
Open - Colour	Accepted	Hong Kong Street Life	Byron Kennedy
Scapes - Colour	Accepted	A different view of shanghai	Byron Kennedy
Open - Colour	Accepted	Minds Eye	Gerry Mullan
Open - Monochrome	Accepted	Ahhhhh	Gerry Mullan
Human Portraits - Colour	Category Winner - PSSA Silver Medal	Contemplation	Sandy Van Vuuren
Human Portraits - Colour	Accepted	Autumn glam	Sandy Van Vuuren
Scapes - Colour	Accepted	Lunar glow over still waters	Sandy Van Vuuren
Nature - Colour	Certificate of Merit	On a leaf	David Wolstencroft
Open - Monochrome	Certificate of Merit	The pearl earring	David Wolstencroft
Nature - Colour	Accepted	Hornbill Study	David Wolstencroft
Open - Monochrome	Accepted	All about the braces	David Wolstencroft
Photo Journalism - Colour	Accepted	The Twins	David Wolstencroft

Members' Images – September 2024

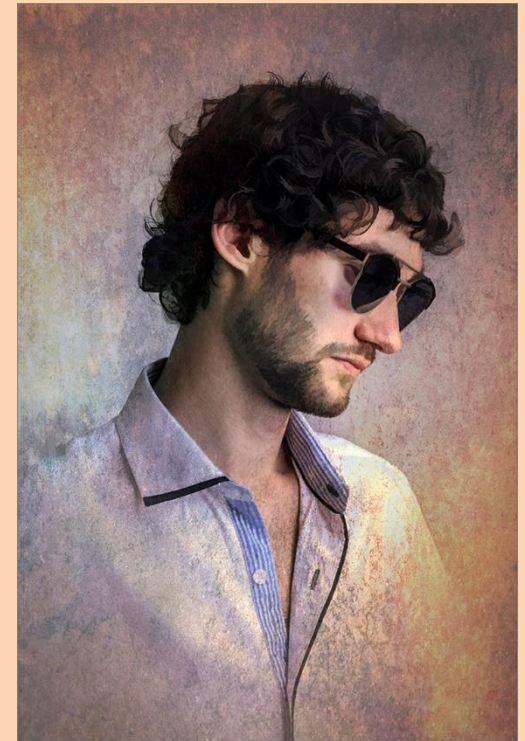
Salon Acceptances

4th Witzenberg Photographic Society National Salon - 2024

<u>Category</u>	<u>Award</u>	<u>Photo Title</u>	<u>Photographer(±)</u>
Scapes - Colour	Certificate of Merit	Chilly Morning	Deon Heyns
Scapes - Colour	Accepted	Icebergs of Antarctica	Robin Larmuth
Scapes - Colour	Accepted	Sunsplashed mountain	Robin Larmuth
Open Colour	Accepted	Dust sweat and gears	Sandy Van Vuuren
Open Colour	Accepted	Ghost castle	Sandy Van Vuuren
Open Monochrome	Accepted	Man in the mist	Sandy Van Vuuren
Portraiture - Monochrome	Accepted	Are you free tonight	Sandy Van Vuuren
Scapes - Colour	Accepted	A new beginning	Sandy Van Vuuren
Scapes - Colour	Accepted	Golden hour magic	Sandy Van Vuuren
Nature - Birds Only - Colour	Accepted	Jackal buzzard flyby	David Wolstencroft
Nature - Birds Only - Colour	Accepted	Vertical drop	David Wolstencroft
Portraiture - Monochrome	Accepted	Army Girl	David Wolstencroft
Scapes - Colour	Accepted	Country Rider	David Wolstencroft

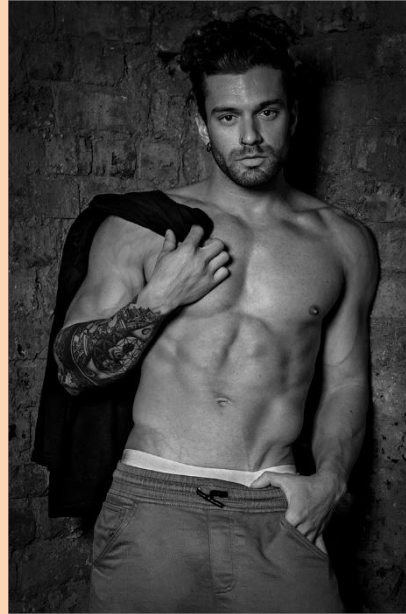
Members' Images – September 2024

Salon Acceptances



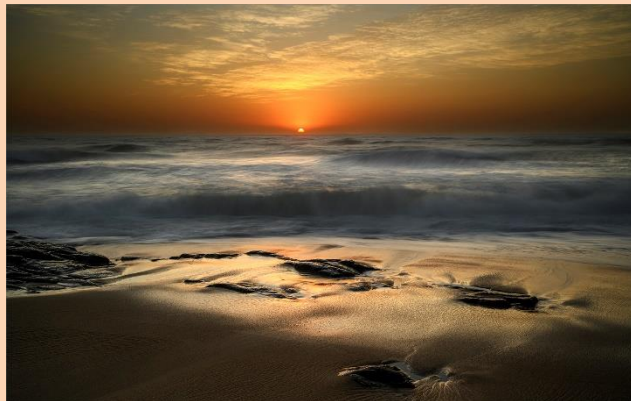
Members' Images – September 2024

Salon Acceptances



Members' Images – September 2024

Salon Acceptances



Members' Images – September 2024

\$\$ – Judges' Vote

1-3 STAR WINNER

Gerry Mullon – Cocktails (41)



Members' Images – September 2024

\$\$ – Judges' Vote

4 STAR WINNER

Phileen Lutge – Wistful (40)



Members' Images – September 2024

\$\$ – Judges' Vote

5 STAR WINNER

David Wolstencroft – In the snow (41)



Members' Images – September 2024

\$\$ – Peer Vote

1-3 STAR WINNER

Ice Cold Coca Cola – Gerry Mullon



Members' Images – September 2024

SS – Peer Vote

4 STAR WINNER

Early morning freeze – Saskia Cole



Members' Images – September 2024

SS – Peer Vote

5 STAR WINNER

A hot cup of cocoa - Fabienne Jardim



Members' Images – September 2024

MC – Judges' Vote

1-3 STAR WINNER (Tie)



Lesly Kearns-Eastwick - Red and Black(39)



Danae Cole - I am speed (39)

Members' Images – September 2024

MC – Judges' Vote

4 STAR WINNER

Deon Heyns – Full Speed (40)



Members' Images – September 2024

MC – Judges' and Peer Vote

5 STAR WINNER

David Wolstencroft – One less spider (COM – 42)



Members' Images – September 2024

MC – Peer Vote

1-3 STAR - WINNER

Just Chilling – Gerry Mullon



Members' Images – September 2024

MC – Peer Vote

MC 4 STAR – WINNER

Spread my wings – Carol Ehrlich

