



# Wodonga / Albury Camera Club

Meeting Date:	9 May 2018	Print Secretary Brian Paatsch 02 6025 2117 <a href="mailto:brianian@dragnet.com.au">brianian@dragnet.com.au</a>
Judge:	Melbourne CC & David Sumner	
Subject:	Nature	

## Colour Prints – Section 'B'

**Melbourne CC Judges:** Jim Weatherill, Sue Rocco, Kees Zonneveld, Lesley Bretherton, Marg Huxtable, Tuck Leong and Jane Barnes

**No Written Comments Available For This Section**

1	179	Cactus Island - Bolivian Salt Plains	12	pts	Place	
2	12	Fragile	14	pts	Place	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
3	176	Last Light	10	pts	Place	
4	175	Hidden Habitat	9	pts	Place	
5	37	Peaceful	9	pts	Place	
6	173	Nature's Monolith	13	pts	Place	Merit
7	64	Sunset Murray River	9	pts	Place	
8	164	I Spy	15	pts	Place	1 <sup>st</sup> Place
9	116	Paddy's Falls	10	pts	Place	
10	54	Cicada	9	pts	Place	
11	79	Waterhole	13	pts	Place	Merit

## Colour Prints – Section 'A'

**Melbourne CC Judges:** Jim Weatherill, Sue Rocco, Kees Zonneveld, Lesley Bretherton, Marg Huxtable, Tuck Leong and Jane Barnes

**No Written Comments Available For This Section**

1	01	Gang Gang Cockatoo (Male)	13	pts	Place	Merit
2	161	Bearded Orchid and Pollinator	10	pts	Place	
3	10	Two's Company	15	pts	Place	1 <sup>st</sup> Place
4	129	Fish Hunter	11	pts	Place	
5	148	Kookaburra	11	pts	Place	
6	146	Glacial Waters	12	pts	Place	
7	113	Regent Honeyeater	13	pts	Place	Merit
8	81	Stopped for a Feed	9	pts	Place	
9	43	When the Meal Comes In	14	pts	Place	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place



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## Monochrome Prints

**Melbourne CC Judges:** Jim Weatherill, Sue Rocco, Kees Zonneveld, Lesley Bretherton, Marg Huxtable, Tuck Leong and Jane Barnes

**No Written Comments Available For This Section**

1	01	Little Raven	14	pts	Place	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Place</b>
2	179	Alpine Woodlands	8	pts	Place	
3	10	Still Part of The Cosmos	9	pts	Place	
4	148	New Life	13	pts	Place	<b>Merit</b>
5	12	I See You	15	pts	Place	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Place</b>
6	146	Beautifully Bleak	13	pts	Place	<b>Merit</b>
7	14	Mallacoota Before Nightfall	12	pts	Place	<b>Merit</b>
8	116	Watching ... Waiting	8	pts	Place	
9	29	Waiting	11	pts	Place	
10	113	Lunch Is Ready!	10	pts	Place	
11	37	Settling for The Night	9	pts	Place	
12	81	Upper Cam Falls	12	pts	Place	<b>Merit</b>
13	43	Who Me?	11	pts	Place	
14	64	Murray River Turtles	9	pts	Place	
15	79	Survivor	10	pts	Place	

## EDIB Competition

**Judge: David Sumner**

1	12	Little Ladies	13	pts	Place	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Place</b>
<p>This is one of my favourite birds to photograph, the female Superb Fairy Wren. Boy are they hard to photograph well, they don't sit still for a moment and they are always in the undergrowth. So, catching two at the same time facing in opposite directions is quite an achievement. The nearest bird is nicely in focus with the rear bird just dropping off focus very slightly due to the depth of field. I suspect that you didn't have a lot of time but focussing on the rear birds left wing may have got the both in focus fully especially as the nice light is on the rear bird's face. I'm not too sure how much you needed to crop in to get this frame but, in this case the tight crop isn't too bad likely because they facing different directions although a bit more space left and right would have eased the shot a little. A nice shot, well taken and well presented.</p>						
2	37	Time for Dinner	11	pts	Place	
<p>This Pacific Black Duck is likely looking for food, what duck isn't but, the title says 'Time for Dinner' yet there is no evidence in the shot of the duck eating or hunting for food etc. This is a good opportunity to mention titles, the images don't get judged on their titles but, equally you should not try to tell a story using a title that the image cannot tell on its own without said title. The image here is well exposed plus there is nice light on the subject and the duck is nice and sharp, it is well executed. The foliage in the water is a little distracting but being able to see the bottom of the pond helps distract the viewer away from this a little. It might have been a little more engaging had the duck's eye been visible however it is still a very pleasant shot that utilises the rule of thirds nicely.</p>						
3	116	Gathering Pollen	10	pts	Place	
<p>A really great idea and I commend the photographer for getting right into the action and shooting close. The fact the stamen part of the flower fills the frame has taken away any distractions and the bee is unquestionably the main subject. Shooting like this puts the whole image on the same focal plane so correct focus should be a lot easier to achieve. However, this image is not sharp and actually looks like it's been sharpened too much but likely hasn't. I think what the issue is here is that the digital file has been pushed too far and likely the Bee and Flower are part of a bigger image but not of good enough quality to crop this far in. This is a great idea but you need either a better donor image or to go out and shoot this shot like this in the first place.</p>						
4				pts	Place	



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5	168	Lunch Time	15	pts	Place	1 <sup>st</sup> Place
<p>This time the title does convey the action in the shot although I would have called it 'Hopeful' looking at that poor hungry seabird on the right of the shot. I'll bet that the photographer who took this was very pleased when the scene presented itself, you can almost hear the clicks of the 20 cameras at either side of them yet, the shot does not give the game away. What I do like about this image is the minimalist emptiness of the land and lots of grey sky as a background and luckily the Polar Bears are not grey. The unfortunate Seal's carcass adds some colour to what is quite a monotone scene, but the image does exactly what is says on the tin. A really nice shot and your good fortune for you to be able to get a shot like this, well done for keeping it to a minimum.</p>						
6	173	Hover Fly on Yam Daisy	13	pts	Place	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
<p>What a nice bright colourful shot and again, a minimalistic shot that has nothing but what is needed to create this scene. Although the background is very blurred due to the DOF, I like the fact that the stem is still identifiable in the shot, it doesn't need to be sharp but what it does do is stops the flower from having the feeling of it hovering is mid-air. The fly is nice and sharp and even though it also has yellow, it is different enough for it to still stand out. Once you grab a shot like this then you should try to get some from other angles and a shot of the front of the Hoverfly in a similarly managed frame might have achieved 15 points but certainly 14, well done and a great image.</p>						
7	175	The Snowline	9	pts	Place	
<p>I hate to be brutal in judging an image but, in this case, I have to so, sorry to the photographer. This is one of those shots that is difficult to judge and the title is telling the story instead of the image telling it. Had I not seen the title, I would have been wondering what this image was about, what am I supposed to be looking at the background, the trees? In this case the title has described 'The Snowline' so I can only assume that the snowline is the main subject and if that is the case then the trees are a visual block to the subject. Technically the image is exposed okay and quite sharp but, there is quite a large glowing edge around the tops of the trees which once spotted becomes the focus of attention. I suspect that someone has used the dodge tool to lighten the background in the gaps between the trees. I really thing that you need to find a better position with a clearer view of the mountains and think about your composition a little more, make them the main subject of your shot and don't rely on the title to do that for you.</p>						
8	176	Skyline	11	pts	Place	
<p>This is a really nice silhouette image with some lovely light and a nice scene with water and dead trees etc. There are a couple of things I must point out with this image, firstly the foreground is too minimal and is likely there to accommodate the reflections in the water. There is more interest in the foreground than in the sky at the top so I would have lowered the camera angle a little and as with the other image, you don't need every reflection to be there in full. The little bit of dry foreground isn't enough so I would crop this up to the reflections of the two trees on the left and lose some of the big tree's reflection. The biggest issue here though is that this image is not sharp at all even without zooming in and the EXIF data tells all, f/4, 1/30th second and probably hand held, you need a tripod for that type of shot unless you are very well practiced. A great attempt that just needs a little stabilisation to get sharpness.</p>						
9	179	Flycatcher Los Glaciares NP Argentina	11	pts	Place	
<p>This looks like a nice sharp shot of a Flycatcher sitting on a shrub, I like the rules of thirds compliance where the subject has some space to look into. Unfortunately, the image is at least 1 stop underexposed and this needs lifting as do the shadows in the foliage. With regards to the overall composition, the bird feels to be stuck up at the top right corner also there is a lot of foliage perhaps too much at the bottom. The main foliage is lost off the screen on the left side which looks just off the screen, either keep it or crop right in. I think that I would have cropped this from the bottom about a third of the way up to remove the lower foliage. This is quite a good image but unfortunately it requires some post production which isn't always possible for a Nature/Wildlife competition which means that you must get it right in camera.</p>						
10	59	Mutitjuluu Uluru	7	pts	Place	
<p>I hate to be negative from the onset of an image but, in this case, I don't have much choice. The image is of really poor quality and is so blurred that I can't really judge it fairly. I did think it was a mobile phone shot because although these types of shots look great on the enhanced phone screen, they rarely produce a workable image for competition even though the phone manufacturer would have you think they can do anything. Look, the image was a good idea, the framing of the two trees and the waterfall crevice on Uluru were a good composition, but the quality of the image is really poor with a lot of overexposure in the sky, sorry.</p>						
11	79	On the Rocks	9	pts	Place	
<p>On the rocks is another image where I don't really know what I'm supposed to be looking at. Yes, there's some foreground, middle ground and a slither of background in the top left corner but, there is just no main subject. Regardless of the composition, this is a shot where you need to know your depth of field and clearly the photographer isn't aware or has forgotten to do this. The rocks and water are nice and sharp, the foreground isn't and it is outside of the DOF and starting to become blurred. Get a DOF Calculator, there are many free ones for smart phones and I believe there are even ones on the internet that you can print and assemble if you don't have a smart phone. The difference it makes is that you will know how much acceptable sharpness you will have to play with. Focus points are also critical to this and maybe the difference between focussing on the bigger rocks or the small rocks in the calmer water was all that was needed to get the foreground sharp. Keep trying with these shots but, you really need to pick a spot before you go to take your images. Foreground, middle and backgrounds for seascapes and landscapes and know you DOF.</p>						



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EDIA Competition							
Judge: David Sumner							
1	161	Sundew Sparkle	12	pts	Place		
<p>I like Sundew Sparkle, it has quite a natural colour palette with greens and browns and it is quite an interesting subject making it quite aesthetically pleasing and makes the viewer look a bit harder to try to work out what it is. A quick look on Google with the keyword 'Sparkle' and we know what we're looking at and that the round globules are sticky to catch insects. Whilst I quite like the effect of the out of focus background, the shot hasn't really been focussed correctly and the depth of field hasn't been utilised to its fullest which would more than likely helped with this shot unless of course that the photographer intended it to be like this. I can only assume that this shot was taken hand held with the camera on 'P' or fully automatic mode because the ISO is set to 500. The camera has likely been on an auto focus mode because the focus point is on the globules closest to the camera which means that this has wasted the depth of field in front of the focus point. The best method of photographing a subject like this that is quite static is to use a tripod, set the camera onto ISO 100 and then attempt to obtain as much depth of field as possible by closing the aperture and manually focussing further into the flower. It is important to work out your depth of field so you can work out where to focus to get the most sharpness and there are many smartphone apps for this. Having said this and taking into account the technical shortfalls it is still a very pleasing image to look at and this has been reflected in its score.</p>							
2	119	No Laughing Matter	12	pts	Place		
<p>I am a sucker for a good title and whilst it doesn't make any difference to the score, it is pleasing when someone makes a little more effort naming their image. This image has just that, a great title and it also has a well-presented pair of Laughing Kookaburras. I like the fact that the branch rises from the bottom corner of the image and even though odd subject numbers are more aesthetically pleasing than even ones here, two seems to work okay. More than likely because the two birds seem to be interacting with each other. The birds and branch are nicely separated from the background and they all seem to be reasonably sharp but it is hard to tell for certain with the 72dpi making it difficult to zoom in and check. The branch does have a slight look of being over sharpened down on the lower right but again this could be the 72dpi causing this. However, there is a light edge to the lower side of the branch which could indicate some over sharpening. All of that said, this is still a very nice image and I do like it.</p>							
3	10	Black Waves	14	pts	Place	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	
<p>'Keep it simple stupid' or the KISS principle often pays dividends and I think it has done just that here especially with the complimentary colours of the black sand and yellow stone/pebble. I'm not sure if this was found like this or it was created to get the shot but, either way it works well with the pebble looking like its making its own way into the image, this puts me in mind of the 'Sailing Stones' of Death Valley. The image appears nicely sharp and I wanted to say taking an overhead shot was not a good idea but, the more I look at it the more I think that this was the best way to take this shot. Well done and nicely taken.</p>							
4	01	Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater	15	pts	Place	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	
<p>This is an image from someone who knows their rule of thirds and the presentation of this image is just spot on with it fitting into the thirds really well. The background is nicely blurred to allow the main subject to stand out from it and stop it competing for attention. The overall presentation of this image is very pleasing to look at and I am so pleased you managed to get plenty of light into the birds eye so we can see that lovely blue iris. Not much more I can say but, well done and a very nice image indeed that fits the brief exactly.</p>							
5	68	Alpine Spider	11	pts	Place		
<p>The title of this image confused me for a little while and typing it into Google didn't shed any light on it either. Google reckoned it should be Alpine Spider and not Alpine but, none of those looked like this one either so, I concluded that it is likely a type of Garden or Marbled Orb Weaving Spider. With regards to the image, I was a little thrown by the flower and stem coming from the right edge where I would have thought it would have risen from the bottom of the frame. I found this a bit unnatural and this made me feel a bit uncomfortable when viewing this and I concluded that it was probably quite hard to photograph hence it being sideways. I did rotate it and found it to be more pleasing to be vertical. I do like the fact that you've gone in close to capture this arachnid and it is nicely lit as well however, a shot like this needs the focus to be nailed and although it does look quite sharp again, I can't check it because any attempt to zoom in degrades the images into pixels blocks. A word of advice, try to photograph the spider's eyes or at least into its face as it makes for a much more engaging image for the viewer and makes it less of a snap type shot.</p>							



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<b>6</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>Lotus</b>	<b>10</b>	pts	Place	
<p>Lotus has some lovely colours; the pinks are just deep and full of life. The water droplets add to the image as well and the depth of field is quite good only dropping off right at the front and rear of the subject. Unfortunately, this is where the good bits end and the critique kicks in as there a number of things that need to be addressed in a shot like this. Firstly, there are three bright spots in the image that once noticed, pull the viewers eyes away from the subject, bottom right, bottom left and top centre. I know you cannot work on Nature images much but you should remove these from the frame when taking the shot rather than in post-production. Next is the petals which are quite close to the edge of the frame giving the viewer a feeling of the lack of space and then the one that is off the edge which will lead the viewers eye away from your image. Keep the petals in the frame or right out but not just touching or just off the edge. The last is the petal that is covering the seed pod which is akin to shooting a portrait of a person with their hair over their face. The seed pod of a Lotus is its heart and we cannot see it which is what spoils this image for me. Pull off the petal or move it out of the way.</p>						
<b>7</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>Peeved</b>	<b>13</b>	pts	Place	<b>Merit</b>
<p>I think the photographer has done a splendid job of getting right in on the action here and maybe they are the cause of the action, who knows? I can see that this is a sharp image and it is really nicely lit and exposed well. It is a shame about the two bits of dead foliage that are on the lizard but I wouldn't be putting my hand there to remove them with those teeth on show so we'll let you off with those. I can't really add anything else to what is a well taken image except to say that the lizards head looks to be a little odd because of the angle it's at and perhaps just rotating the image clockwise a bit might have helped it look a little less awkward.</p>						
<b>8</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>Scarlet Macaw</b>	<b>13</b>	pts	Place	<b>Merit</b>
<p>This is a nice colourful bird drinking in an environment which is quite the opposite, this means that the bird stands out really well from the background. The fact that the bird is drinking from the water means it is nicely on the diagonal which helps a lot with the aesthetics of the image and the droplet of water falling from its beak is well timed. The subject is sharp as is the rock it is sitting on and the although the background is really dark it doesn't really detract from the story in the image with the exception of the bird's beak just slightly disappearing against it. One adjustment that can be carried out on Nature/Wildlife images and that is cropping and, in this case, I would have cropped a little off the bottom to remove the rock in the bottom left corner, slightly above the blurred foreground rock. I might have also looked at cropping the top right-hand rock out too although this one isn't as intrusive. Overall, this is a nice well-presented image that tells a story about a Macaw drinking at a water hole.</p>						
<b>9</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>Twin Preening</b>	<b>12</b>	pts	Place	
<p>Again, we have an even number of subjects and again, I think it has worked okay in this image. Here we have 2 Australasian Gannets preening themselves in unison and they both appear to be sharp so good depth of field handling, ideally the focus point would have been the left wing of the rear of the two birds to maximise DOF. The exposure is also good and the composition is certainly right in close on the two birds, a little too tight in my opinion and so much so that we've lost tail feathers off the edge on the right and almost at the bottom too. I think the birds just need a little more space so they look less imprisoned by the frame of the image. I know it isn't always easy when the birds might fly at the click of your shutter but, in a case like this grab the initial shot and then try to improve on it, get down lower, check you've framed the subjects correctly, if not take another shot. Just remember that it is easier to crop than it is to add space in post-production. One other small point, it hasn't happened but, both bird's heads are almost at the point where they blend with the background which would have been disastrous, just be aware of this happening. Otherwise it is a good shot and well taken but just needs a little more story to bring it along.</p>						
<b>10</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>A Quick Stop</b>	<b>13</b>	pts	Place	<b>Merit</b>
<p>This a lovely close up image of a butterfly resting on a leaf hence the title "A Quick Stop' although I'm not sure that butterflies have the time to have a quick stop, they only live short lives. Depth of field in a case like this is always going to be shallow and it is absolutely imperative that you get the right bits in focus and I feel that this is nicely sharp but, it would have been a huge amount easier to tell had I been able to zoom in a little. As expected, the background is really out of focus but it is green with other leaves which works really well to highlight the subject. Quite often shots like this are spoiled by the light shining through the background foliage but not in this case. One thing I like is that we can clearly see the butterflies small claw clinging to the leaf which shows me that this is a living insect and not a dead one which is often the case. The shot is a little static and there isn't much story in the scene however, it is still a nicely taken image and well done to the photographer.</p>						



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11	129	Yarning	11	pts	Place	
<p>Yarning is another image whose title confused me a little and the only thing I could think was that the bird is yawning and it's a misspelling but, then I thought hang on its talking so its spinning a yarn. A nice simple image, nicely framed and composed well with the tree starting on a diagonal from the bottom left corner and the majority on the thirds lines. Reasonably well exposed given the circumstances of a white bird, bright sky and a dark tree branch but, there is some overexposure on the bird's feathers. All the makings of a great image but just not quite there because it isn't sharp enough and it was taken at the wrong time of day. Shots like this need to have sharpness on the subject and looking at the EXIF data a Nikon D750 and a 400mm lens I can only assume the subject was just too far away to hold the camera steady enough and cropping the image has just highlighted the lack of sharpness more. I'm a little unsure why you would use ISO 400, I ALWAYS use ISO 100 unless the subject is right next to me and I know I am not going to have to crop the image. I always have my camera on a tripod for shots like this or at least use a monopod. It really is a great effort just let down by that sharpness which unfortunately needs to be nailed.</p>						
12	14	Sea Eagles	13	pts	Place	Merit
<p>I'm a bit of a sucker for birds of prey and White Bellied Sea Eagles are not that common in Melbourne so I'm pleased to see these here. Again, we have a pair of subjects and again the interaction means it sort of works okay. The image is quite simple with the exception of the small branches but, I'm pleased you left the top of the grass in the image as it adds context to the scene. Cropping the bottom higher would have left out of focus strands in the image and they would have been a distraction. As with the spoonbill in the tree in the last shot, this was taken in harsh overhead sunlight which isn't ideal, there are some dark shadows under the birds and their heads do have some overexposure. This is a hard shot to get right because the bright sky overwhelms the sensor and usually causes the birds to silhouette and some slight exposure compensation will help in these cases, here the exposure is likely as best as it could be in this light. The birds appear to be sharp and their eyes are bright which is good and overall this is a very pleasing image of a great subject and I am particularly pleased to see more than one bird of prey in the shot.</p>						
13	43	Lazy Days	11	pts	Place	
<p>This is what I assume is an Australian Fur Seal doing what seals do best out of water, being lazy. (<i>I didn't know there were seals in the Murray at Wodonga/Albury</i>) seriously though I suspect this is one of the seals off the Nobbies on Phillip Island. Whilst I do like this image, I feel there are a number of things that could have been improved upon. Firstly, the angle the shot was taken at doesn't really engage us with the seal, perhaps a lower more forward angle would have been better. Secondly, the focus has been missed because the flipper is sharper than the seals face likely because multi point focussing was used which will focus on the nearest part of the subject under any of the points. As a consequence, there is some evidence of what looks like over sharpening in the area of the head. Thirdly and not so important, I would have cropped some from the bottom of this shot as the subject is a little central in the frame. Please note that you can only sharpen a sharp shot and whilst that sounds stupid in layman's terms it really means you cannot sharpen something more that isn't already sharp in the first place.</p>						
14	27	Natures Reflection	11	pts	Place	
<p>I stared at this image for a while because something was niggling at me and didn't seem to be right and after a while it hit me, it isn't level and whilst it is only very slightly leaning to the left, this slight lean makes me feel uncomfortable when I view the image. I like the way in which you have framed the image using the small branches of the trees near to your location whether this was by design or luck it does help take our mind off that featureless sky. I really understand why you took this shot and included its reflection, I quite like these dead trees myself. However, a reflection should never compete for attention with the main subject and unfortunately, here it does just that. Also, by including all of the trees reflection it means that the horizon is dissecting across the centre of the shot and in reality, our brains are pretty good at filling in the gaps so you don't need all of the reflection, crop the bottom up about a 1/4 of the image and you can fix all three things at the same time in that process. A great attempt, try this with a better sky and nicer light and this will be a great shot but, don't forget the story, all nature images need a story.</p>						
15	163	Who Lives Here	13	pts	Place	Merit
<p>Yes, this is just a bush scene but, there is almost a story created by the title in this case. I wondered whether the question asked by the title is talking about the swamp in the foreground but, that looks like a cave up there on the left and there are broken branches in front of it so I'm thinking Yowie or a Grizzly Bear. Of course, in Australia it's going to be neither but, the title hasn't tried to describe the story here but has actually created the story and just as a side note, it isn't a bad image either. Peter Coulson, Australian Photographer of the Year 2010 said about his own work whilst judging at our club, "If I can get someone to stop and look at my image for 10 seconds then that is a successful image". I find myself stopping and looking at this image because it invokes thoughts about whether something lives in that cave or not. The image is nicely exposed and looks to be sharp from front to back. The composition is spot on and I do like the leading line of the creek leading off into the image. The bulrushes make a really nice foreground too, if only it had a Yowie in it then you'd have that shot of a lifetime, well done all the same.</p>						