

Forest of Galtres Camera Club

Monday 12th March

Two Mikes

Two Mike's in question were Mike Coultras and Mike Barnard, both members of F.ocus Photographic Group, Bridlington. Mike C. farms on land on the Yorkshire coast in the Bempton area which naturally he knows well. This means that he has learnt the habits of sea birds and land mammals in his home patch. This does not mean that he doesn't have to spend patient hours waiting for the right moment to close the shutter. He has captured many fabulous intimate moments of wildlife activity. As members marvelled at the results, he explained the more technical aspects of his photographic shoots as well as informing on the behaviour of the different animals photographed.



There were images of a preening gannet with a single delicate feather clutched in its beak, rare views of puffin chicks, three hares huddled together and roe deer moving through a meadow and so much more. Mike began by showing the dramatic rescue of an angler who had

decided to climb down a cliff face then fallen and broken his leg. He explained the risks to the helicopter crew, the dangers of flying so close to the cliff face and the risk of bird strikes that would bring the helicopter down instantly. This was a successful rescue by the brave rescue team which successfully winched the guy to safety.

Mike Barnard is a photographer of great skill and success who still resists the use of RAW as a format in which to take his photos as many photographers do today. For them, processing systems can then be used effectively. Mike does not use screen calibration, full frame or ICC paper profiles and seems quite proud of the fact. He may not have moved forward in the respect of these techniques but that does not prevent him from capturing great images, some of which are winners in competitions beyond the local level and others for which people will pay.

His first set of images were taken using a 105mm sigma macro lens with a Neewer 48 LED ring fitted. This combination enabled Mike to produce close up detail of the central structure of various flowers that were stunning and closely resembled abstract works of art. In contrast with Mike C's seabird images, Mike B produced wonderful images of garden birds. We can all photograph garden birds, and might try, but don't quite manage the pinpoint sharpness and great close up detail that Mike achieves.

Images taken amongst the autumnal splendour of the Lakes followed as well as photographs of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway to meet the interests of some of the train enthusiasts amongst club members. Of that, Mike stated that he only photographs the engines between October and January when the cold air means the steam emitted creates the most dramatic photographs. He concluded with coastal images from Whitby northwards.

This was the last meeting of the current season apart from the AGM to be held next week. Many thanks to both Mikes for bringing the season to a close with great photographs and shared expertise.

Plans for next season's programme are well under way. No need to be idle during the summer months as four competition titles will be announced. There are also images to be taken for entry into next season's portrait, monochrome, landscape, print and portfolio competitions. Each has its own trophy and there are other trophies to be

won too. Come and join us. So many ways to take a photograph these days - even your phone could make you a trophy winner.