

Summary of Topics

- Equipment best suited for wildlife photography – what Shem uses; what I use; welcome to look.
- Selection of “budget” equipment that does the job and ensures you can capture images you could publish or enter in competitions
- Supplement briefly what Shem mentions on the different types of “safaris” available – with a focus on Africa

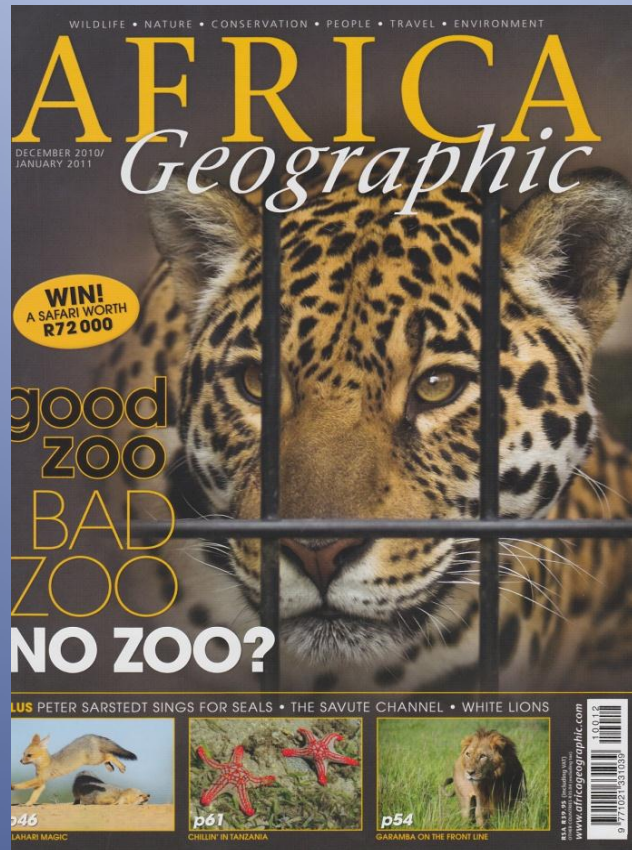
- Emphasise the important differences between “game viewing safaris” and specialised “photo safaris” - the perils of choosing the former
- Specific topics such as: vehicle types, vehicle etiquette, working with other photographers in group, looking after equipment in dusty conditions, laptops, backup & more backup, etc, etc. --- will leave to Shem

What's Changed in Wildlife Photography in 2-3 Years?

- AUD\$ reached parity with US\$ - still there
- Two best-ever Canon cameras for wildlife photography have come on the market – 1DMk4 & 7D
- New series telephoto lenses are lighter, faster focusing, almost 3-dimensional in performance – Canon 800mm to be followed later this year with new 500mm & 600mm and a 200-400mm with built-in 1.4X converter.
- Overseas travel by US & European photographers has diminished noticeably – less crowded locations, more choice, best value in 20+ years for Australian photographers.

More Changes

- Wildlife conservation initiatives in Africa and South America are at an all-time high – more game & hence improved photographic opportunities
- The establishment of two quite strict & sought-after environmental accreditation schemes for lodges & camps in 2009 – lodges seeking to differentiate
- The choice of lodges and camps is increasing, particularly in East, Central & Southern Africa – e.g. see Africa Geographic January 2011 edition versus same in 2008



Sixteen pages of advertisements for lodges, camps, villas, private game reserves, safaris, a small number of specialised photo safaris, etc., in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere. In 2008 there were six pages of adverts!!

Conservation Photography

- This genre of photography is rapidly evolving as a newly recognised and influential discipline and as a tool for gaining support for conservation efforts
- It is simply photography that encourages and supports conservation initiatives.
- Promoting conservation with a lens, rather than a pen only, reaches more diverse audiences as it engages hearts as well as minds – see a few examples

Conservation Photography cont'd

- Conservation photography is not simply reportage of an objective fact or institutional issue; instead it is endangered species driven, focusing on the conservation aspects about which the photographer cares strongly
- It positions photography and the viewers in the context of environmental stewardship
- Powerful images captured by respected photographers open a direct window into societal consciousness and are an significant catalyst for change

Who Are These Photographers?

- In a nutshell, some of the best in the business
- **Yann Arthus-Bertrand** : Earth From Above
- **Frans Lanting** : Life – A Journey Through Time
- **David Doublet** : Water Light Time
- **Christina Mittermeier** : Founder of ILCP
- **Joel Sartore** : Great Migrations (with National Geographic)
- **ILCP** : A Climate for Life
- **Stanley & Kaisa Breeden** : Wildflower Country
- **CPA**: An initiative by C4 Images/Shem Compion

Why is “CP” Influential

- Demonstrates the first principle of ecology: “everything is connected to everything else”
- It provides connection to the wilderness experience and can provide the spiritual spark that we are all connected
- Being exposed to such photographic work has the power to “touch the images of the soul”

Will “CP” Continue to Influence?

- Henri Cartier-Bresson spoke prophetically to the challenge for conservation photography today:

“Photographers deal in things which are continuously vanishing and when they have vanished there is no contrivance on earth which can make them come back again”

- His challenge is being increasingly heard and responded to by the growing influence of powerful images on the conservation of wildlife, its habitat and vanishing ecosystems. We are the beneficiaries of this work
- I see this trend continuing as the legacy of conservation influence is built through the flourishing legacy of conservation photography. Here’s why!

Pause – did you

- Worry about the composition?
- Check the sharpness?
- Wonder if the image complied with the "rule of thirds" or the "golden mean"?
- Look for "leading lines"?
- Check "for perspectives"?
- Say 'Oh my God' look at the "the awful framing"?

No Of Course You Didn't

- Or at least those amongst us who are real people, didn't!
- Why?
- The images touch our heart, our soul, our spirit long before they became the subject of mind-based analysis
- That is the power of evocative conservation photography
- It probes for the best in most human beings

What Kind of Equipment?

- I use Canon digital (never been in a dark room)
- Why? I started off with Canon; my investment is now too large to change.
- My Nikon friends are equally happy !!!

Gear in the Bag ?

- Primary... fastest fps as possible; crop factor of 1.3+; lens fitted at all times, ready for shooting
- 1DMk3 - 12 MP
- Secondary... Lens fitted and ready to shoot -
1DsMk3 - 21 MP
- Handholdable lenses... medium focal length –
(i) 100-400mm f/4.5 L, (ii) 400mm DO f/4
- Short focal length lenses... (i) 50mm f/1.2, (ii)
24-70mm f/2.8

➤ **Long (>500mm) telephoto lens** – 800mm
f/5.6 L IS USM

➤ **Wide angle lens** for animal herds, animals in their environment and landscape images –
16-35mm f/2.8 L MK2 USM

Accessories

- **2x Converter** doubles focal length of lens but will lose some AF functions with many lenses
- **1.4 x Converter** an inexpensive way to increase focal length of lens by 40%. AF functions maintained, mostly.

- **Dust Covers** ~ to prevent dust, sand, spray, etc. damaging your expensive gear
- Must be easy to slip your camera/lens combination into the cover, every time & especially when driving to next location
- Lens Hood Cover ~ neoprene is best

Most Important Accessory of All

Camera Support

~ Tripod light & strong

~ Wimberley Head

~ Beanbag

Less Specialized Equipment Suitable?

Yes!

- Can you capture award winning images with non-specialist equipment?

Absolutely .

Do I carry all of this equipment all of the time?

Mostly.

Airline travel is another story, but is 'doable',
with a little ingenuity

Is all of the equipment necessary all of the time?

Very much a personal choice.

Recent Review of Budget Telephoto Lenses

➤ Please contact me and I will send to you a copy of this excellent review of “Budget” super-telephoto lenses. The review was conducted by the UK magazine “Photo Plus” it is worth reading.

- Email - denis@denisglennon.com, or
- 0418 923 103



Chris George
Associate editor

Super-telephoto

Get closer to the action, even from a distance. **Chris George** checks out eight affordable monster telephoto lenses that are perfect for sports and wildlife

Turn to the sports pages at the back of just about any newspaper and you'll see remarkably close-up images of the action, even though the photographs themselves were taken at quite a distance. Follow the same sports on TV and you'll notice rows of press photographers on the sidelines using huge, wide-apertured telephoto lenses, most of which cost between £5,000 and £10,000 a throw. That kind of kit may be prohibitively expensive, but thankfully it's

Camera Settings for Wildlife/Bird Photography

(These are my personal choices; others are, of course, equally valid)

1. AV mode & Evaluative metering
2. AI Servo in “high continuous” shoot mode, except when subject is static and I do not expect it to move.
3. If subject is static I use One Shot; this allows me to recompose, when I have focused on the eye; I move the focus point around.

4. ISO above 400, for wildlife in action; more recently 800 for birds in flight in low light
5. Always photograph birds in flight at shutter speed faster than 1600th second
6. Never use a handheld lens at a shutter speed slower than the reciprocal of the lens' focal length, even a lens having image stabilization.

4. ISO above 400, for wildlife in action; more recently 800 for birds in flight in low light
5. Always photograph birds in flight at shutter speed faster than 1600th second
6. Never use a handheld lens at a shutter speed slower than the reciprocal of the lens' focal length, even a lens having image stabilization.

There is so much preparation you can do, around Perth, to finesse your wildlife photography skills before you land in Africa.

Knowing exactly how to operate your equipment without having to guess settings or refer to your manual will go a long way towards you coming home with many, many iconic images.

What about some practice before you go on a Photo Safari?

- If you can photograph birds in flight, or whales from a small boat , you will have no trouble with wildlife photography in Africa. No birds !!! Try photographing cars on roads..
- If you master even the basics of bird photography you can be assured to come home with a bagful of iconic images from a well organised photo safari guaranteed.
- All the images in the AV were captured in Western Australia, and most of them around Perth.
- The techniques and camera settings I spoke of earlier were used for all of them.

Africa is more Than Wildlife

- People love being photographed
- Culture of nomadic tribes still there
- Landscapes can be extraordinary

Into Africa Again & Again

