

**Phillip Island Monthly Club Evaluation – Judge Feedback for -Feb 2025 - Subject –OPEN- Judge – Johanna Botman**

*Please refer to Judge Instruction Letter for ratings: **HC** (Highly Commended) - **C** (Commended)*

Sequence by Title	Member No	Title	Judge Rating	EDPI
1	377	<b>Kookaburra in Flight</b>		<p>A technically difficult image to capture well and you have made a good job of it. The position of the bird on the angle is really effective in emphasising the motion of the bird and the boke background helps to isolate the bird and make it THE single subject in the photo.</p> <p>My single issue with the image is the point of focus which is the tail end. I know the frisson of panic that sets in when the opportunity arises for a fabulous shot, and how quick you have to be to get it right. When the subject is an animal it is always better to have the face or eyes in focus. A faster shutter speed may have captured the movement just that touch better.</p>
2	377	<b>Lorikeet</b>		<p>A common garden friend who is often amenable to having its photo taken. We can see movement in the bird from the body shape. The colour in the red eye and the blue on it's head have been well captured.</p> <p>The branches of the bottle brush dominate partly because they are quite bright and, in the case of the seed pods, out of focus and they don't help us appreciate the bird.</p> <p>Its good that you have maintained the bow of the red of the flowers under the bird to provide a nice balance.</p>
3	326	<b>A Five Year Old's Love</b>		<p>What a charming young girl who is clearly pleased that you are taking her photo. That warm light in the room has enhanced the colour of her hair and skin and given the image an overall warmth.</p> <p>That background is not your friend. The outside light and the white venetian blinds work against that warm glow of the inside. Those horizontal lines of the blinds take me out of the image, and the window wants to take my attention to the outside instead of staying on the child.</p> <p>Nice capture of a spontaneous moment that will live in your heart.</p>

4	326	<b>A Touch of Paradise</b>	<p>Blue sky, blue water, fluffy clouds ... what's not to love about paradise? The title is apt, it is a Touch of paradise. I like the idea that we can see a snippet of paradise, but I don't like that I have to wade through a lot of scrub to get to it.</p> <p>It looks like you have used one of the inbuilt preset 'artistic' filters and this has done some work on the clouds for you. I think that you need to be very careful with the use of these sorts of filters – or in postprocessing because they can dominate the image and not deliver the sense of what you want to portray.</p>
5	885	<b>Beach shack SPG</b>	<p>This is a nice shot captured on a sunny day and I can almost feel the warmth of the sun and the suggestion of humidity. I can see that there are lots of things that would help to have a good time here ... motor bikes, bicycles, boats, kayaks.</p> <p>The image is one that will remind you of a place that you liked and have a fondness for, but I don't think that you have shown that to me. I think that some tighter cropping to focus my attention into something in particular about the scene that made you want to take the image would make this a better shot.</p> <p>I'm sure that you had a wonderful time there.</p>
6	884	<b>Bealey River</b>	<p>A lovely view and classic New Zealand. The early morning light on the mountain tops provides a touch of warmth in an otherwise cold looking landscape.</p> <p>There's a lot to see here and I think that that is sometimes poses a difficulty in trying to decide what it is that you want to capture and how you want us to see it. A scene like this is so vast it needs something that will take our attention and provide us with a leap into the image. The moon goes some way to doing that, but it is bright and a little unfocussed so doesn't help us. I think this needs a different foreground treatment. The wash of dark water is just a mush that stops us from really appreciating the texture and colour of those rocks.</p> <p>It is two subjects at once and doesn't know which one to focus on. There is plenty to think about for the next trip!</p>
7	852	<b>Braving the Rapids</b>	<p>HC</p> <p>This is an excellent example of how a fast shutter speed can capture movement and clarity. Very clever that all the moving water and the duck have been made still but can still feel the motion and movement of that water. We can almost feel that 'suddenly no earth' that the duck feels.</p>

			<p>The lip of the waterfall is a lovely line across the image and it leads us to the falling water beyond and then the bubbling water brings us back to the duck and the splash.</p> <p>The image looks like it was taken opportunistically, and good on you for that. But, in order to have such good luck, you have to be watching and aware and have your settings right. You have done well to make all those stars align.</p>
8	889	<b>Brown Thornbill</b>	<p>C</p> <p>You've done well to capture a tiny, busy bird.</p> <p>You've done well to frame the bird with the vegetation and your image is clear where it needs to be and out of focus where it needs to be.</p> <p>I think that it would benefit from a tighter crop. While I like the leading line of the branch the bird is sitting on, we don't need to see so much of it. And by cropping in tighter, you will lose the white flowers on the right-hand side that don't need to be there.</p>
9	399	<b>cafe on wheels</b>	<p>What an inviting little caravan! Lots of nice goodies for sale.</p> <p>The owners have given the van a colour scheme that blends in well with the surroundings and it looks like a cool spot on a warm day.</p> <p>I think that it could do with a bit of cropping so that we see the van more clearly and can read the menu. The text in an image always takes your attention, but in this one it isn't clear enough to make a decision about what to order. I think that you have shown a lot of the trees to put the van into a context, but I don't think that the sawn logs add any beauty or real value to providing that context. I think I 'd rather see the van more closely, be able to read that menu and select from those yummy cakes and biscuits.</p>
10	884	<b>Church of the Good Shepard</b>	<p>C</p> <p>A classic location. A single subject against drama in the landscape and the sky. It also presents it challenges in trying to take an image that sets yours apart from the thousands of others and I think you have done that. Your low angle has lessened the impact of the road (carpark?) on the right-hand side of the church and given more responsibility to those grasses in the foreground. And they have taken on that responsibility by providing the pyramid shape that takes us to the building.</p>

			<p>The clouds are a bit too bright and that means that you lose the definition of the mountains on the left hand side</p> <p>The shadows tell me that this is a north looking image and that can present problems with shadows. You've overcome that with some lightening of the stonework of the church and that adds colour and texture that help the image 'work'</p>
11	870	Cogs	<p>This image challenged me, and I'm really pleased that it did. It would be all too easy to make this into a sepia or black monochrome to tell a story of age or neglect.</p> <p>Instead, the vibrant purples and blues make me look twice and makes me think about the subject in a way that I hadn't before. I love that we can see the spider webs against the shadows and in the sunlight. They are well captured.</p> <p>I'm not so sure about the tree in the background. I like that it is unfocussed, but I think that not having it there would enhance the industrial theme of your image.</p> <p>I like that there is clarity in every component of the mechanism and lots of textures to examine.</p>
12	866	Eastern Rosella	<p>Front on images of birds are a rare thing, and you have done a decent job to try to capture it in this way.</p> <p>Eastern Rosellas are such colourful birds and are magnificent when they fly. In this image you haven't really managed to capture that essence of that species and that is a shame.</p> <p>The grevilia is such a good frame for the bird. Your focus on the flowers in the front and on the leaves surrounding it are well done. There's good colour and light in the boke background and that touch of negative space at the top works well for you</p> <p>I would like to see more of the fabulous colours of the bird itself.</p>
13	869	High and dry	<p>This is a clear image showing lots of lovely colour in the rocks and the sky. Your low angle helps to isolate the rocks from the sea in the background and that emphasises the title of your image.</p>

			<p>I ask myself what it is that you want me to see or know about the subject. Is there something special about these rocks or are you happy with the holiday snap of somewhere?</p> <p>I think that if you had something in the foreground that takes the viewers attention that would give some sense of scale to the rocks that would make it a stronger image.</p>
14	869	Rock awash	<p>This is a much stronger image than the last one. Including the water in the foreground – and showing the movement in the water is a much more interesting idea than the dry stones and puddles.</p> <p>Your square crop is not common for a seascape but works here to both isolate your subject from the background, but also to show the dominance of those rocks against the tides and waves.</p>
15	852	Eying off it's prey	<p>C</p> <p>You have captured that fox well. We can see that it is focused on the heron, but I'm guessing that the fox knew that you were there. It wasn't worried.</p> <p>I think that you have done well with what you saw and captured. I think that the reeds between the fox and the heron help to tell the story of the heron trying to hide.</p>

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16	852	Finch_jumping shadows	HC	<p>Photography is bliss when it all comes together. The right settings, the right moment, the right place and then the finch even adds to the bliss by moving for you!</p> <p>You have captured that movement at such a good part of the movement. Those feet are so tense I can feel the muscle movement that created the jump.</p>

			<p>Your shadow is as clear as the bird.</p> <p>I am pleased that you have kept all the seed pods in the image. It would be tempting to crop to the action, but in this case, the context is so much of what you are showing us in the image. The seed pods don't need to be in focus because the intent of the bird is. And aren't you lucky that there is an odd number of seeds? Very clever of the Finch to give that to you. 😊</p>
17	866	<b>Gippsland Water Dragon</b>	<p>What a magnificent animal and how good was he to pose for you like that. There's such stillness in the dragon and clarity in the reflection, yet we can still see movement in the water.</p> <p>His face is a little dark and it may have been good to see if his eye could have been lightened just to give it that bit more texture.</p> <p>There's really good texture in the animal's skin and lovely texture in the log that it is holding on to.</p> <p>C Well done.</p>
18	889	<b>Juvenile White Browed Scrubwren</b>	<p>Lots of these Little Brown Birds rarely sit still so it is a challenge to get a good image of them. You've done well with this one.</p> <p>You've isolated the bird well from the background and those background colours are a good complement to the colours of the bird.</p> <p>You have captured really good clarity in the feathers and feet of the bird.</p> <p>HC Well done.</p>
19	884	<b>Kicking Back</b>	<p>What a happy chap!! This photo shows some of the joy that can be had photographing animals in the wild. I'm going to assume that it is in the wild because there of the knots of vegetation both in front and behind the animal.</p> <p>There's a joy in the animal itself that you can rarely capture in a caged animal.</p> <p>C And your image is sharp where it needs to be.</p>
20	399	<b>King Parrot</b>	<p>It's nice when birds co-operate with you and sit and pose while you take their photo. This King Parrot knows that you are there but is pretending that it doesn't care.</p> <p>He's a little soft, I think that the point of focus is slightly beyond the bird because there is some softness in the perch as well. Bird photography is</p>

			<p>highly competitive and fraught with large lenses. I think you should think about some of the other bird images here today that have fared higher in the scoring and think about what and how they show the bird.</p> <p>It's a good side on shot that clearly shows the colours and it's good that you have captured that little bit of turquoise in the wing.</p>
<b>21</b>	431	<b>Lemon Time</b>	<p>Still Life is a challenging genre because you have control over every part of the image and you can't blame nature or opportunity for any 'lapses' in the image.</p> <p>That said, this is a good effort. There's balance and spread in the yellow of the flowers, the lemons and the candle. You have a variety of textures in the vases, the leaves and the tablecloth.</p> <p>My concern is with the height of the cloth on the table on the left hand side. I can't see why it is raised, or rather, I can't see that having it raised adds to the image. Having it raised there takes my attention away from the texture in the table runner that is the base for the objects in your collection.</p> <p>I think you have done well to add the pearls. They add interest in shape, line and texture that works well.</p>
<b>22</b>	896	<b>Novice_896_Water Dragon</b>	<p>You've captured the dragon really well. Good pose on the animal, the slightly cocked head shows the animal is alert to you and is keeping an eye on you, and you have captured the colour and texture on the skin and that second eye!</p> <p>It is a bit bright so some of the scales around its mouth have lost definition – where you can see that definition below the jaw line where it is in the shadow.</p> <p>You have separated the animal well from its background so we have no distractions and can happily focus on the animal. Well done.</p>
<b>23</b>	896	<b>Novice_896_Staring Lion</b>	<p>You have done well to crop your image so that the focus of our attention is that lion and nothing else, although you could also have cropped closer to eliminate the black areas on the right hand side. The left side looks like there is a little bit of a vignette, but the right suffers from too sharp a change in colour from the fur to the background.</p> <p>The eyes are a little soft. The focal point is on the nose and might, and while they offer good colour and texture to the image, the eyes need to be in focus.</p>

			<p>One of the challenges that we – as photographers – can set ourselves is to look at the world in a way that other’s haven’t done before. In this age of digital photography, and mass travel, it is easy to take an Instagram approach to our images and be happy with something that has been done before.</p> <p>I say that with this image in front of me because I think that is what has happened here. To me, it looks like the lion was in a zoo and has seen thousands of tourists take his picture before and is somewhat bored with the whole thing.</p> <p>I’d like to see how else you might take a picture of a lion when you are not in Africa. Even in a zoo, a lion will walk, yawn, scratch ... any number of things that are shoot worthy and will help you to tell a story that is different from the rest.</p>
24	896	<b>Novice_896_waterdrop leaf</b>	<p>This is a well captured moment on the back lawn or in a park. There is some really nice balance between the spines of the leaf and the softness of the surrounding lawn. There’s some good use of colour with enough variations of green to start to think about a monochrome image.</p> <p>When you decide what the subject of your image is, you need to then focus all of our attention on that. So that would mean, in this case, cropping out much of that lawn – not all of it, because it does provide a change in texture that gives a little more interest to the image. But your subject is the leaf and the drops, so that is what should be highlighted.</p> <p>I think that adding white in the border is unnecessary. That white is too bright for the overall tone of the image.</p> <p>With that said, this is a good effort with what could be cliched subject matter.</p>
25	899	<b>Novice_Glass</b>	<p>You have captured a tranquil scene with lovely colours. That grey sky against the pale pink clouds make the image appealing. The spots of colour from the buoys is a good inclusion.</p> <p>The yacht provides some context and gives us a sense of scale and serenity. That yacht is not quite in focus and that may be because of the lighting at that time of day or your level of zoom.</p> <p>I wonder if you had the opportunity to have the yacht not so close to the centre. Sailing in, perhaps. I know that it is not always possible. The best</p>



			<p>looking clouds may have dictated your position, or there may have been other restrictions that dictated what you included.</p> <p>It's a good shot that shows you can have lots to look at in a minimalist image.</p>
26	899	<b>Novice_Just Hanging Around</b>	<p>I like that you have tried something different. Changing the scene to black and white helps to isolate the subject from the background. Your picture is clear and I like that I can see the hair of the child move in the breeze.</p> <p>The shadows are short so this was taken in the middle of the day – the hardest time to take photos. But you have done well with it.</p> <p>My main comments are about the brightness across the centre of the image and that child is in the shade. I understand that it would be hard to take anything differently at this time of day, but if the child is willing, it might be worth exploring other options.</p> <p>I like that you are looking down at the child and I like that you have made a feature of the chains.</p> <p>C</p>
27	899	<b>Novice_Running Water</b>	<p>Good running water seems to happen in the most challenging environments for photos, and it looks like you've found one of them.</p> <p>You've composed the image well with the water moving through the image from the upper right to the lower left and there are some gorgeous greens framing the stream.</p> <p>Sadly, though, the greenery is not in focus and so are the rocks in the foreground. The lack of light in areas where there are good streams is a big problem. You really need a tripod to handle the slow shutter speeds. And I think I would try to do something about that brown vegetation across the top of the image - despite knowing that zooming in slows the shutter even further. But you have done well to attempt such a difficult image. Don't give up on it. It's worth going back and trying again.</p>
28	870	<b>Old Trains</b>	<p>There's a lot to like about old trains and they provide a lot of fodder for photographers.</p> <p>I think you have tried hard to get that first train into the third of the photo – and I think that you may have done that so that we can see the context and complexity of the stabling area. It doesn't work for me.</p>

			<p>I think you lose too much of the detail of that first locomotive, and that loss is not made up with the other details. For me, it looks like the image is two thirds 'other stuff' – especially whatever that is on the left hand edge - without enough detail to be the subject of the image.</p> <p>There are a few ways you could highlight that first loco. You could have changed your F stop so that the background is blurred, you could have taken a step to the right (I know, I know!!) so that you had more of the first one side on and had it across to the two thirds mark. Just some suggestions that may have more impact than the vignette.</p> <p>I like the monochrome, I think that works well but you might consider toning down the highlights in the roof.</p>
29	885	<b>on reflection- Singapore</b>	<p>There are some interesting shapes and reflections in this image. Shiny public sculptures can make it difficult to get clear reflections and you've done quite a good job of achieving those.</p> <p>Someone else's artwork?</p> <p>Good sky for Singapore and there is a lot of it. And there is a lot of the grass close to that mirror that takes up a lot of the image but doesn't add to the subject.</p> <p>Multiple mirrors across the image give this a sense of balance and space.</p>
30	431	<b>Paradise_Valley_Mist</b>	<p>You have captured some lovely light and shade in this image. The mistiness of the back 'rows' of trees help to give depth to the image and tell us about the size of the forest. That line of mist in the centre gives us something to look at as our eyes wander the image.</p> <p>For me, I need something that tells me the reason for the photo – a subject and I can't see one in this image. Yes, I know that it is the forest but the challenge is to find THE ONE THING that captures the viewer and helps them to see what value you saw in that forest. This is a bit of that 'I can't see the forest for the trees' thing.</p> <p>The lighting conditions are difficult in these circumstances. It is a balance between trying to capture the essence of the fog and to produce an image that is bright enough to see the detail.</p>

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31	431	Pensive	HC	<p>All too often when we take portraits of children we ask them to smile, or they think that they need to smile. This an excellent example of why that it not a good idea.</p> <p>Making this monochrome gives her more drama and we are captivated by those eyes.</p> <p>Really good use of lighting especially that there is little variation between her cheek and the background. At first I didn't think that you needed the vignette, but I changed my mind. The vignette brings it all together and keeps us in the image.</p>
32	447	PRINT_Ant	C	<p>Such a clear shot of such a small animal. I really like the way I can see the individual hairs on the ant and on the leaf.</p> <p>I like the hole in the leaf, telling me that, perhaps, this ant is not alone and there are other things that are eating the leaves.</p> <p>The side on shot provides more interest .</p>
33	447	PRINT_Jumping Spider Two		<p>A good shot of the spider showing all the detail that we need to identify it. There's good clarity and definition in every art of the spider that we need and the background leaf provides an interesting colour contrast.</p> <p>While clear and focused, for me, this is more of an identity shot, the kind of image that you might see in Wikipedia or iNaturalist so lacks photo impact.</p>
34	447	PRINT_Jumping Spider	C	<p>Where as this one shows me some action, some life and spark in the spider. The spider's position on the leaf adds to the 'art' of the image. The red outline of the leaf also helps to contain the image of the spider and keeps our eyes in the image and on the subject and helps to show the fineness of the silk of the spider.</p>

35	869	<b>PRINT_Sunderland Bay, Phillip Island</b>		<p>Ah! The third in a series. If I read the titles correctly, these are all from the same photographer.</p> <p>This one has the something in the foreground that I suggested in the first of the images and I understand that we need to work with what we have, but that piece of seaweed just doesn't do it for me. I know that I asked, but now that I've got it, it's not what I wanted. For me, it is too close to the edge of the image and isn't clear enough, or interesting enough, to make me want to look at it for any length of time.</p> <p>But I do like that this is the half 'high and dry' and half full 'flood'. That line of the edge of the water gives us some interest and the slow shutter speed means that we have some softness to balance the craggy rocks.</p>
36	870	<b>Red gaurds carriage</b>		<p>I've made mention before about the subject of an image and the context of it and I think that you have tried to provide both with this one- although I don't think it works.</p> <p>That very narrow field of focus means that the thing that we are being invited to look at is at the very edge of the image, inviting me to ask what is it about the remainder that you don't want me to know?</p> <p>I think, in saturating the reds, the dark areas have become darkened to a point where there is a big part of the image that is difficult to see.</p> <p>I think that this scenario has a lot of potential but there are a lot of technical issues to overcome in order to get a really good shot.</p>
37	855	<b>SA Wagon</b>		<p>My first reaction to this image is Wow! I do like that area of the world and you have captured it well.</p> <p>Your focus is on the wagon, as it should be and its good to see that some of the surrounding saltbush is also in focus. That the hills are out of focus helps to tell the story of the distance involved in this landscape.</p> <p>I'm not so sure about the pole in the image. It's modernity is at odds with the age of the wagon and the hills. I also think that your sky is a bit bright and washed out. A little bit of work on that could make the sky bluer and bring out more texture in the clouds and make this a really compelling image.</p>
38	889	<b>Slugfest</b>	HC	A well captured image.

			<p>That little bird is so clear and so well separated from the background. I can almost see the insect wriggle. I can see, from the ruffle in the feathers that the bird may have had a hard time getting that 'slug' into its beak and is happy for a moment's rest before taking it home.</p> <p>I am reading a story into this image and that can be fraught with danger, but I think that this one provides enough evidence to tell me that story and, for me, that's what makes an image a good one.</p> <p>I like that the colour and texture of the birdbath complement the bird. This is a really good capture. Thank you.</p>
<b>39</b>	855	<b>Stockholm</b>	<p>I'm happy to be challenged by a photograph and I will admit that I am challenged with this one. Calling it Stockholm doesn't really help me understand the image.</p> <p>But, there is some lovely use of primary colours and intriguing leading lines. The blue on the escalators against the very red tunnel shape and vertical line.</p> <p>The use of the frame that introduces the bright white into an otherwise cavernous image doesn't work for me.</p> <p>Is the photographer here? Can you tell me about it?</p>
<b>40</b>	855	<b>Sydney</b>	<p>This location was well known for its street photographers in the 1940s to 1960s so making this image into black and white gives it a timelessness. You have added to that by giving the image a white border reminiscent of a printed image.</p> <p>There's plenty of movement in the people walking yet a stillness.</p> <p>I've thought long and hard about the flagpole in the image and I'm inclined to forgive it. For me, it adds to the movement in the image. There are others who would say that it is Wrong to have a pole poke out of the top of someone's head, but in this case, there is the buffer of the umbrella that saves it.</p> <p>There's a strong use of negative space in the bottom left of the image with the pavement pattern providing lines that lead us into the image.</p>
<b>41</b>	326	<b>Temby Point Reflection</b>	<p>You have interesting clouds in this image and the swirl of them almost mirrors the movement of the water in front of the photographer.</p>

			<p>I find the colour in the shoreline a problem. It is quite dark and lacks clarity. I'm not sure if part of the problem I had with the image was the reasonably low resolution of it. Some of the other issues arise because of the time of day and that we are looking towards the sun and there's hints of silhouette in the tree trunks.</p> <p>I think that it is a location that could produce some startling images at different times of day and it's worth going back and trying again.</p>
42	866	<b>Wattlebird Waratah</b>	<p>Waratahs are rare enough to see, and to pair it with a Red Wattle Bird is rather special.</p> <p>You have excellent clarity in the flower and the bird and managed to capture the three spots of red to give that triangle.</p> <p>That totally blurred background shows us just the bird and nothing else ... except for that dark patch on the upper right hand side.</p>
43	885	<b>wing walk 2 - Duxford UK</b>	<p>Aeroplanes can be as difficult to capture well as birds, and there's a reason for that! They move and are often far away.</p> <p>That sky hasn't been kind to you and I understand that you don't get to choose but it has implications for the clarity of the image. The underwings are a little dark and the focus is a little soft.</p> <p>I like that one plane is blue and one red – nice contrasts against the bright sky. And you have positioned them well in the frame. You have captured the jet trail and made that an important part of the subject of your image.</p>
44	399	<b>yellowfaced honeyeater</b>	<p>What a good capture. This bird's legs and beak and eyes are perfectly in focus and you can see the tiny water drops on it's breast. Lovely capture of the movement of the tail feathers and the wings.</p> <p>The boke is lovely, cool shades of green and really helpful in isolating the bird so that it is the only subject.</p> <p>HC The texture of the branch adds to the image.</p>
45			

