

Phillip Island Monthly Club Evaluation – Judge Feedback for – JUNE 2025- Subject –OPEN- Judge - Trish McKeown

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

Sequence by Title	Member No	Title	Judge Rating	EDPI
1	892	All Wined Out		This image has sharp details throughout with the subject brightly lit and the bright white wall emphasising the strong shadows. It's difficult to discern whether the barrel is in fact on a lean, or whether the shot was taken that way. The tight framing gives this a cramped feeling, which detracts from its success. The idea behind this was a good one; try to think about how best to showcase the subject for the viewer.
2	896	NOVICE- Autumn Feels	COMMENDED	The maker has used the diagonal of the boathouse to great advantage to lead our eyes across the scene. The yellows and oranges in the paddleboats are repeated in the autumn foliage, which is a clever touch. Consider whether the foreground grasses and two floats are worth including – it may look cleaner without them. Be mindful of movement in the branches; being bright, they attract attention and might have looked better in sharper detail. An image with potential, showing a good eye on the part of the maker.
3	896	NOVICE – Baby Gorilla		A good portrait of this gorilla. It's been well-framed, with the animal looking straight at the camera, holding the viewer's gaze; wouldn't it be great to know what it was thinking? There is some noise and soft focus throughout the image, which may be enhanced in PP. Animal images are often opportune, as this may have been. Ideally, if you have time, check your settings to achieve sharp details and eliminate noise – the better your image is in camera, the better the end result. Well done on having a good eye for composition.

4	866	Bee & Grevillea		This brightly coloured image with its strong pinks and greens contrasting with the bee grabs our attention. There's a lot going on in this, with areas of both sharp and soft focus. A tighter crop along the bottom and LH side may eliminate some of these distractions. The bee might be better shown against a more simply constructed flower, to showcase its features better. The bee itself is in sharp focus, with a good catchlight in the eye, which is not easy to achieve.
5	896	NOVICE - Birds		Parrots are a popular subject, noted for their animated faces and generally bright colours, as seen in this image. The LH bird is squawking about something, which seems to amuse its mate. There are soft details and noise in this, which may be the result of incorrect camera settings, or a very tight crop of a larger image. The concept behind this is commendable and success will come with practice.
6	892	Calm Waters		Showing the foreground rocks of this seascape in some detail, with the water flattened by using a slow shutter, this is a nice image. Our view is drawn beyond the rocks to the golden clouds on the horizon. It may be worthwhile using a linear gradient to enhance the rocks, giving more contrast and detail to this area. You've taken advantage of the curve of the water to direct our view through the rocks to the horizon, which is very effective.
7	875	Cormorant	HIGHLY COMMENDED	A impressive image of a great cormorant in flight. Details are crisp, highlighting the glossy feather patterns, the typical emerald eye and the yellow gular skin. The maker has composed this well, allowing room around the bird and space for it to fly into on the RH side. A credit to the maker.

8	431	Cradle Mountain Vista	COMMENDED	It's amazing the difference a slight change of angle can make in an image. This small timber structure at the base of Cradle Mountain has been photographed many times but in this, the maker has deliberately placed it to the side, so that our view is drawn to the peaks forming the cradle shape of the mountain. Details are sharp and the colours are nicely shown but be mindful of lens spots in your images. A good landscape.
9	866	Damsel Fly	HIGHLY COMMENDED	When you can count the hairs on the damselfly's legs, you know it's a good shot. The angle of the insect and curve of the plant stem, with the iridescence of the body and tack sharp details overall make this a stunning image. Well done to the maker.
10	892	Derelict		Using artificial lighting to show this ramshackle building, we can see some of the old pulleys from abandoned machinery of some sort; we can also see a few stars in the night sky. The details shown give little indication as to the purpose of this structure, which leaves us wondering. Think about the image and what the viewer will really see in it – remember, they weren't with you when you took it, so your image has to tell the story.
11	887	Enough of the talk		This shot of one of the staff of the Co-op giving her talk on the life of a pelican is nicely shown, with the pelicans being very patient. Taking pictures of wildlife mean we are the mercy of wherever they happen to be at the time, so while the 7 pelicans to her right are in a good group, the odd one out, with its feet chopped off, detracts from the scene. Perhaps waiting until the speaker was looking toward the camera may have allowed the viewer some connection to her? A well detailed subject worthy of another go.

12	862	Eucla Jetty		Built in 1887, this jetty was an important part of the supply chain from Albany and Esperance to Eucla. After nearly 140 years, it's amazing that some of it is still standing. Giving the impression of a monochrome, (the pink on the end plank gives it away), this image has the jetty on a good angle out to sea, with an obliging cormorant on the end. Allowing more room to the LH side may have been worth trying, if possible; while details could be sharper, along with adjusting the blown-out sand in the foreground. A few adjustments in PP will bring this to its potential.
13	889	Female red Capped Robin	COMMENDED	A delightful portrayal of this tiny bird of barely 12 cm has a catchlight in the eye and the colouring is authentic. The simple composition ensures the bird is the focal point. Details could be a little sharper, but given the constant motion of the bird, this may have been an opportune shot. Be mindful of the length of your titles.
14	866	Fennel Flower		This is actually a Nigella flower, in the last stages of sepal drop. These can be difficult to capture in good detail, due to the tangle of multifid involucre, stamens and styles. While the involucre and sepals are sharp, the central area is not clear. Showing this against a black background was a good idea to emphasise the structures and has been well done. A challenging subject to master.
15	399	Fish Dinner		A "right place – right time" image with the Crested Tern parent about to feed the hungry chick, being protected by the other parent, with its wings surrounding it. Given that this was probably a fortuitous shot, there may not have been time to adjust settings for an optimal outcome. However, cropping the RH bird, whilst not ideal, may remove its distraction from the image and shift the focus to the action we really want to see. A good record of nature in action.

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16	325	Fissure		An interesting capture of a rare phenomenon known as a “sun dog”, which is usually an indicator of coming rain. Our view is naturally drawn to the very bright area in the sky, which is the subject, while the rest of the image is softly coloured, due to the extensive cloud cover. A few minor adjustments and straightening the horizon in PP will enhance this even more. A clever capture.
17	361	Frozen Ti tree	COMMENDED	The ice patterns in this, together with the strongly coloured ti-tree branches and flowers make this an intriguing subject for a photograph. Showing the unique and original is always refreshing. Whether this was frozen intentionally or by accident, doesn’t matter – the end result was worthwhile. Try a small crop around each edge to remove the aberrations and experiment by turning it 90 degrees to the right, for a different view. It’s good to see something different.
18	325	Incognito		Taking shots of surfers can be difficult, as often they have the sun behind them, as in this case, which can result in a lack of detail in the surfer. By masking the figure in PP, you could adjust the exposure and shadows to reveal more details. Or you could convert this to a monochrome and again mask the surfer but adjust the blacks and shadows to create a more of a silhouette. Remember to allow room in the direction a moving figure is heading for better composition. This is worth working on.

19	885	Koala 1 - Morning		This is one of a series of koala images by this maker. This animal is shown in a tangle of gum leaves and branches, with nice detail in the fur and a sharp eye. Perhaps a crop of the RH side may be worth trying – does the image need all those leaves? There are parts of bright lighting and some shadows, which are a bit disconcerting, a few adjustments in PP may help.
20	885	Koala 2 - Lunchtime		The lighting in this is even, with a catchlight in the eye and good detail in the face and fur. A crop of the RH side will remove the unnecessary leaves on the right and a small crop of the LH side will trim some empty space on the left. The animation in the face makes this an interesting shot.
21	885	Koala 3 – Afternoon nap		He's certainly looking very relaxed after a feed, let's hope those claws hang on! The bright background and out of focus leaves are a little distracting. Details in the koala are fairly good, but a clear view is lost with the criss-crossing of branches. Not an easy subject for any photographer.
22	399	Lake		This is a good panorama of sky reflections in a lake, edged by trees, showing a scene of tranquility. The colours are true-to-life and the details are fairly sharp across the image. Keep in mind that scapes look better when the horizon is both straight and usually, but not always, doesn't cut the image in half. Because the sky is reflected in the lake, you could crop across the top to reduce its height and crop the two skinny trunks on the RH side. A couple of simple adjustments would allow this to reach its potential.

23	852	Lone Tree		An image full of possibilities, using the stark single tree as the focal point, with subtle colouring in the sky and foreground. While the central placement of the tree works, it may look equally effective placed toward either side third or shown in a portrait format by cropping each side. There are indications of some object removal to the RH side of the tree, which detracts from the image; be judicious with your editing. The shape of the tree is eye-catching, which was well-seen by the maker.
24	431	Man of the Bush		He certainly looks like a real bush character! The monochrome emphasises the details in his outfit, from his well-worn shirt and pants to the battered hat and scruffy beard. A portrait format may have worked better, by removing the unnecessary dark sides and allowing more room above his head. It's a shame he left his sunglasses on for the shot – being able to see his eyes may have given the viewer more of a connection to the subject. A promising image.
25	889	New holland Honey eater	COMMENDED	Showing the branch on the diagonal, a catchlight in the eye and a simple composition give this image impact. The contrast of the vivid pink of the callistemon with the monochrome feathers, and green leaves are elements that work. There is some noise and the focus is a little soft, which may be improved in PP. The background bokeh has been well done.
26	862	New Holland Honey eater - WA		The framing of this shows the bird to advantage, contrasting with the even blue of the sky. The eye is clear, however, the feather details could be sharper to show this at its best. Practice with different settings, even just around your home, to find those that work best for your subjects. You have a good eye for composition.

27	399	Owlet Nightjar		A relative of the Tawny Frogmouth, the Owlet Nightjar is a smaller bird and distinguished by the three head stripes, as seen in this image. The feather tones blend with those of the tree it's perched in; the shape of the opening suggests this may be in a zoo or sanctuary of some sort. If possible, check your shots as you take them and adjust the settings to ensure the sharpest result, as the soft overall focus has let this down. The tight framing was a good choice on this occasion.
28	431	Pancake time		A face full of concentration as she whisks the eggs into the mix! The lighting is even across the scene, and this picture does tell a story. However, the reflection in the top RH corner draws our view, as does the knife rack on the left. Take the time to look at the view of the whole scene in set shots such as this. Reframing the scene, by including the girl, the bowl, the eggs and the stove as the necessary components and excluding the unnecessary elements, can make all the difference. The sharp details and placing the girl on the LH third have worked well in this image.
29	875	Penguin and chicks		This is a very close-up view of a penguin and chicks in their nest; it is assumed this was taken responsibly, with the welfare of the birds in mind. The parent and the front chick's heads are in clear focus, with catchlights in each eye. You could try a much tighter crop to reduce the amount of out-of-focus areas around the frame, as they add little to the scene. An interesting image.
30	887	Peregrine falcon		Most bird photographers would have the Peregrine Falcon on their "wish list". This image has the potential to bring this to its best. The bird has been captured with some good detail, but a few simple adjustments of shadows, highlights and a touch of sharpening in PP, could really give it the impact it deserves. Allowing a bit more room above the bird's head might also give a feeling of space around the bird. A special capture worth developing.

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31	889	Pink Eared Duck Pair		Pink-eared ducks are very popular subjects for birders, with their bright fluorescent pink markings contrasting with the ordinariness of their brown feathers, as seen in this image. Details are sharp in the front bird, but less so in its partner. Perhaps waiting to capture both birds above water, to include their spatulate, square-tipped bills which are a feature of this breed, may have given the image more interest. In framing moving animals, try to allow room for them to move into – in this case, on the RH side. The background works well against the birds.
32	887	Powlett River		The dunes and their vegetation at the mouth of the Powlett River provide plenty of interesting shapes and textures, as shown here. The colours in the landscape contrast with the shades of blue in the cloudy sky. A small tweak of the shadows may bring out even more detail in the foliage. When framing the shot, try reducing the amount of foreground, which has little interest and check the horizon is straight. As usual, the Powlett River has some bird life, seen in the white-faced heron in the water and the two birds in the LH corner. An image worth extra processing.
33	884	PRINT – Melbourne Central Shot Tower		A vibrant image of the shot tower, surrounded by the metal framework of the glass cone, casting shadows across the brickwork. It's unfortunate that the hoarding for the phone has been allowed to block some of the cone, as its bright colours draw our view. Perhaps a much tighter frame, together with some reduction of the highlights may reduce the distractions around the intended subject. A good attempt at a difficult subject.

34	884	PRINT – Spirit of Anzac		An interesting composition utilising “The Driver” sculpture from “The Driver and Wipers” monument, commemorating those who died at Ypres in Belgium, including those who drove teams of horses. The concept behind this is commendable, showing imagination on the part of the maker. This may have had more impact showing sharper details in the sculpture and having fewer distractions in the sun and lens flares. This is an idea worth another attempt.
35	884	PRINT – Sunrise swimmers		The lovely golden glow of the rising sun is evident along with the silhouette of the jetty extending across the scene. However, the bright sun acts as an eye magnet, distracting our view, as do the clouds in each corner. The title suggests the swimmers are the subject, but the previously mentioned distractions, together with the expanse of the foreground water, have the viewer searching for them in the image. It is often difficult to achieve really good shots when shooting directly into the sun – keep this in mind when shooting, for best results.
36	875	Pulley Wheels		The motion in these wheels has been shown well, with a belt going to each side, resulting in a polished surface of the wheels. Details are sharp throughout the image, showing the framework holding them in place. There are many details in this image but they give little context as to the purpose of the wheels and belts and what type of machinery they are driving. The maker may have been struck by the size or speed of the wheels, but the viewer can only speculate. Ensure your image tells the story you wish to convey.

37	325	Safe Surfin'		This is an image full of promise. There are a couple of people on each side of the frame, with the sea and vista beyond. The colours in the scene work well, with shades of blues and browns. Removing the white wave across the bottom would remove its distraction. The maker may like to try this as a monochrome, or perhaps reframing the image into two separate images, each in a portrait format. There seems little to connect the two groups together, but each has interest on their own, so is worth a try.
38	361	Snow drops		This image shows the form we commonly grow in Australia, the Snowflake, <i>Leucojum Aestivum</i> , with evenly-sized translucent white petals, and green nectar guides. There has been some editing done on this, darkening the stems, leaves and background to highlight the flowers. When editing, it's often a good idea to enlarge your image, to enable you to make the masking lines smoother and cleaner. A little more room above the flowers may also give the image more balance. A nice subject for an image.
39	852	Spoonbill in flight	HIGHLY COMMENDED	A crisply detailed image of a yellow spoonbill in flight. Perfectly framed and well-lit, we can see the layers of feathers in the LH wing, the scaly legs and the light blue eye. A lesson in what makes a good image of a bird in flight.
40	852	The Ocean	COMMENDED	One could assume the maker has used a slow shutter, presumably on a tripod, to ensure the sharp details in the rocks and reduced movement in the waves, in this sunset image. The layers throughout the scene of rocks, middle waves and the sky all have something of interest for the viewer. Ideally, the central bottom rocks could be removed, if possible. It's good to see a true seascape, where the sky is secondary to the sea.

41	869	Walkerville sunrise	COMMENDED	The maker has a good eye for a shot, as seen in this image. The curving leading lines of the rocks direct our view to the rising sun on the horizon. The sun has been captured to be visible, without its brightness dominating the image. A little lightening of the shadows in the rocks would reveal more detail, while cropping half the sky might concentrate our view to that of the coloured clouds. A nice image.
42	862	Woolba free camp Night sky		The maker has a good eye for a shot, as seen in this image. The curving leading lines of the rocks direct our view to the rising sun on the horizon. The sun has been captured to be visible, without its brightness dominating the image. A little lightening of the shadows in the rocks would reveal more detail, while cropping half the sky might concentrate our view to that of the coloured clouds. A nice image.

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