Bob
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Natures
Photos

Natures Photos

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Specialist Raptor Photography day

This workshop is held at a bird of prey centre in Northamptonshire which provides the opportunity to photograph a truly unique range of birds. Unlike most other centres most of these birds are trained and actively used for experience days where people learn more about falconry and hunting so are in excellent condition, very keen and fit.

The centre itself is located in the centre of a splendid 3,000 acre private estate providing us with excellent opportunities to photograph birds in a wide range of natural settings. Whilst we have have access to the whole of the estate we will choose an area to work where the birds are comfortable and with a limited distance between locations we will use to maximise time with the birds. I have worked closely with the owner of the centre and the head falconer to choose areas which will both provide natural settings and work well for us and the birds. We will start with more static settings to ease you in but move quickly to flying birds where I will provide all the necessary tuition and guidance to help you obtain superb photos and develop your skill at the same time.

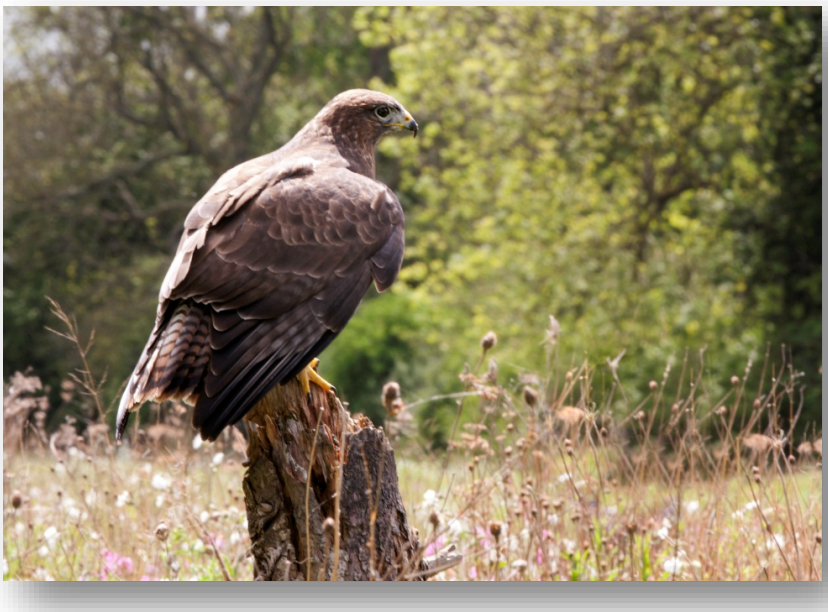
During the day we will have ample opportunities to photograph a range of birds, from owls, various hawks and challengingly fast falcons and huge eagles. The exact list will depend on the weather and those which the centre feels are most appropriate on the day. With many of these species there will be ample opportunity for static and flight shots and many of these will be with birds with the minimum levels of equipment required to control the bird.

Our host for the day will be the head falconer and raptor expert Jo Askew. Jo is an experienced and highly respected falconer with extensive experience of training and flying a wide range of birds including the more difficult species such as the large falcons and eagles. Her experience is invaluable and is key to making the day a success. I have a falconry background and have worked with Jo for over 10 years and so she fully understands our specific requirements and that we can be very demanding.

In addition to static shots we will have the opportunity to practise more taxing flight shots. With many species Jo will be able encourage the birds to fly the same path repeatedly thus enabling you to practice and fine tune your tracking abilities before attempting to photograph the large falcons the true high speed masters.

As your wildlife photographer guide I will be on hand all day to assist by explaining relevant techniques, camera settings etc. to help you to take the best photographs. This will include the very specific requirements to help improve your success rate with flight photography as well as managing e3xposure for difficult shots against the sky.

Almost any medium length lens will do for this workshop but for the flight shots a lens reaching 200mm or more would be better. A fast (wide aperture) lens of 200mm or more would also give pleasing head shots. Shorter lenses are better for capturing static shots e.g. birds on fence posts etc. In reality a combination of lenses from 70mm to 300mm or longer, perhaps as zooms, will therefore be ideal. A tripod isn't necessary but if you are taking a longer lens you might like to include one. We will be visiting a number of different areas but whilst we will be walking over parkland it won't be arduous and you can always leave kit you don't need to use for a particular set of shots back at base.



The workshop will last 5 to 6 hours and start times will vary according to the time of year as all workshops will be timed to make use of the best light of the day. The centre is situated just to the north of Northampton and I will provide full directions timing etc. on booking. We will hope for good weather but if this isn't the case we will fly the birds less and spend more time taking portraits and staged shots of birds in specific and species appropriate settings. In the event of very poor weather I will attempt to contact everyone the day before and if possible reschedule for a later date. This day has been individually arranged for me and the people I take and thus we can, within reason and respecting the bird's welfare, ask Jo to take as long as we like with a particular bird and vary the positioning and natural lighting to suit our requirements.

It could be a chilly day so please bring suitable warm waterproof clothing and suitable footwear. Some of the shots will be taken laying on the ground so you will get dirty ! Hot drinks will be provided throughout the day but could you please bring a packed lunch.

This will be an intensive workshop so bring plenty of memory cards and batteries and expect to take home lots of great images.

Bob Brind-Surch

All dates, availability and costs are advertised on my website, www.naturesphotos.co.uk.

Other dates may be available if groups wanted to book them. Please contact me for further information.

The charge for the day includes tea/coffee on arrival, full photographic tuition and falconer guides plus entrance to the venue

To book places please visit my website and complete an online booking form or contact me direct, details below.

Telephone 01536 373977 or Mobile 07983 427202 (preferred) or email info@naturesphotos.co.uk.

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