Workshops and Tours Guide

Young Lion Cubs – Mara

2019

For more up to date copy visit www.naturesphotos.co.uk or scan QR code.
**Workshop and Tour Dates – 2019**

N.B. these are the dates as at publication of this newsletter - other dates are being added all the time and courses are filling up please see website for up-to-date details and to book places.

I maintain waiting lists for all workshops where dates have yet to be advertised or for cancellations. To put your name on a waiting list visit workshop page on my website and click the green **waiting list** button.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop and Tour Details</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dragonflies – National Dragonfly centre</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Wicken Fen</strong></td>
<td>£110 per head</td>
<td>7th July 2019&lt;br&gt;28th July 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Insectivorous plants specialist macro workshop – Stowmarket</strong>&lt;br&gt;(Max 2 or 3 delegates per workshop)</td>
<td>£180 per head</td>
<td>9th June 2019&lt;br&gt;29th June 2019&lt;br&gt;21st July 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Specialist birds of prey experience</strong></td>
<td>£120 per head</td>
<td>16th February 2019&lt;br&gt;6th April 2019&lt;br&gt;11th May 2019&lt;br&gt;8th June 2019&lt;br&gt;6th July 2019&lt;br&gt;31st August 2019&lt;br&gt;12th October 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>British Wildlife Centre – Surrey</strong></td>
<td>£168 per head</td>
<td>28th March 2019&lt;br&gt;30th April 2019&lt;br&gt;13th May 2019&lt;br&gt;20th June 2019 – Special Golden Hour Session&lt;br&gt;16th July 2019&lt;br&gt;10th September 2019&lt;br&gt;8th October 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fungi Close up and Macro workshop</strong></td>
<td>£80 per head</td>
<td>2019 dates to be published soon&lt;br&gt;Check website for latest</td>
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<td><strong>Taking control of your camera – Icarus Falconry Northamptonshire</strong></td>
<td>£110 per head</td>
<td>2019 dates to be published soon&lt;br&gt;Check website for latest</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Secret British Mammals - Devon</strong>&lt;br&gt;2 day workshop / safari&lt;br&gt;<em>Other dates available for groups of 4 -8 on request</em></td>
<td>£248 excluding accommodation and meals</td>
<td>30th/31st March 2019&lt;br&gt;27th/28th April 2019&lt;br&gt;1st/2nd June 2019&lt;br&gt;22nd/23rd June 2019&lt;br&gt;13th/14th July 2019&lt;br&gt;7th/8th September 2019&lt;br&gt;19th/20th October 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Owls and other birds of prey in evening light</strong></td>
<td>£110 per head</td>
<td>10th July 2019&lt;br&gt;18th July 2019&lt;br&gt;24th July 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Harvest Mouse Photo Workshops</strong>&lt;br&gt;(Max 3 delegates per workshop)**</td>
<td>£62 per head per 1/2 day</td>
<td>2019 dates on website</td>
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Kenya – Big Cats of the Massai Mara – The Rolling Plains of Africa.
Cost for **2019** – £**5,659** all inclusive – flights – full board, park fees etc.
24th Feb. to 5th March **2019**
Bookings being Taken for 2020

Southern Serengeti – Southern Wildebeest Migration and Ngoro Ngoro Crater
10 nights
Cost for **2019** – £**5,180** all inclusive – flights – full board, park fees etc.
3rd to 13th March **2019**
Bookings being Taken for 2020

Uganda Gorilla Trekking – 4 days
Cost for **2019** – to be decided – please e-mail for more information or to reserve place.
16th to 18th March **2019**
Bookings being Taken for 2020

Wild Europe
Spectacular European Mammals
Cost for **2019** - £**870** Including all land transfers and accommodation but excluding flights - see tour details for further information.
2nd – 8th May **2019**
Bookings being Taken for 2020

Southern Tanzania – An unspoilt photographer’s paradise.
10 nights
Cost for **2019** – £**6,500** all inclusive – flights – full board, park fees etc.
13th to 24th September **2019**
Bookings being Taken for 2020

I maintain waiting lists for all workshops where dates have yet to be advertised or for cancellations. To put your name on a waiting list visit Foreign Tours page on my website and click the green “waiting list” button.
An intensive day with your camera photographing wildlife under the guidance of an experienced professional wildlife photographer is a superb way to improve and perfect your photographic techniques as well as an excellent opportunity to take home some superb shots.

As Natures Photos I run an increasing number of such days around the country either at centres with specific wildlife subjects e.g. butterflies or birds of prey or more general days in suitable locations. These workshops and courses are designed specifically for the enthusiastic photographer with a real interest in photographing wildlife. As your experienced wildlife photographer and teacher my aim on all of my courses and tours is quite simple, to help you master many of the field techniques required of a competent wildlife photographer and to come away having improved your technique, your knowledge of the subjects and with some memorable images.

The workshops are carefully tailored to enable me to support everyone from the novice photographer to those who are considerably more experienced. I limit the numbers on these events so that I can personally support and assist you to improve and refine your photographic skills. This includes gaining a better understanding of digital photography techniques and how to achieve creative images. I will be available throughout the workshop to assist and guide as much as required and will take the time to discuss and explain particular techniques and approaches.

In addition to UK based day workshops I arrange and run longer overseas holidays / tours / safaris specifically for the enthusiastic photographer. The aims are exactly the same as for the UK workshops except that we have longer to achieve them and will be visiting some stunning locations with equally stunning wildlife.

I advertise dates for all my workshops and tours through my website, www.naturesphotos.co.uk, and through my regular newsletters. I am constantly adding new dates and new workshops, if you wish to be kept informed of these and other developments in Natures Photos please visit my website and sign up for my newsletter. If you wish to book a place please visit the workshop page and click on the large green “book a place” button by the workshop you are interested in.

This leaflet contains details, dates and prices for the workshops and tours available at the time of publication. Fuller details and booking forms are available on my website. If you are reading this brochure electronically then all the links will take you to the relevant parts of my website. If not please visit www.naturesphotos.co.uk and follow the links to workshops, UK and abroad.
Brief workshop details

Fuller details and booking via website – naturesphotos.co.uk

Specialist Raptor centre

This unique workshop is held at a raptor centre in North Northamptonshire where the birds are trained and actively used for hunting so are in excellent condition, very keen and very fit. Unlike many other centres and because these are working birds many are kept with the minimum of equipment making semi natural shots all the easier and much more realistic.

The centre has a wide range of different raptors including many species of owls, falcons from the small kestrel right up to the magnificent Chilean Eagle Buzzard and a wide selection of eagles and hawks. It is part of a splendid 3,000 acre private estate providing us with excellent opportunities to photograph birds in a wide range of natural settings. We will have access to the whole of the estate and working with the owner and head falconer I have selected a number of natural settings for us to use to photograph the birds. During the day we will have ample opportunities to photograph a range of birds, from owls to magnificent eagles and challengingly fast falcons.

In addition to static shots we will have the opportunity to practise more taxing flight shots. We will start by encouraging some species 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.

I also run an afternoon and evening session in the summer concentrating on Owls in the evening light. Please see my website www.naturesphotos.co.uk for details.

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British Wildlife Centre Surrey

This amazing location offers the very best opportunities for photographing British wildlife. The centre has been especially created with large enclosures designed specifically with photographers in mind. Some of the major TV channels including the BBC use this venue regularly. It is normally open to the public only on bank holidays and at weekends, and then only provides limited access to the animals. I have many years of experience at the centre and am well known to the owner and staff and as a result we will have the centre to ourselves and privileged access into the pens with some of the animals so there will be no barriers or wire obscuring your view! You will come home with stunning photographs that would be extremely difficult in the wild, will have improved your photographic technique and learnt a great deal more about your camera and the wildlife. This is a workshop not to be missed.

Animals available at the centre include foxes, otters and wild cats - you will enter all these enclosures for stunning photographs - stoats, weasels, polecats, mink all in natural settings with logs, water and appropriate undergrowth. Other animals available include Badgers, roe deer, red deer, muntjac deer, snakes, water voles, frogs and more. This is a truly magnificent centre and provides unrivalled photo opportunities.
Secret British Mammals
2 day Workshop Safari - Devon

Having spent many years studying and photographing our British mammals I know first-hand exactly how difficult this can be as most of our native species are extremely secretive and many nocturnal.

I am therefore thrilled to be able to offer an opportunity to use a private wildlife collection in Devon as the setting for this 2 day workshop/safari. With over 16 years’ experience working with wildlife film makers and photographers the owner has created a series of purpose built photographic and film sets where we can photograph an excellent collection of captive British mammals. This is the centre where the burrowers BBC2 series was filmed and we will be using some of the sets built specifically for that series.

The aim of this workshop/safari is to provide an unparalleled opportunity to photograph the broadest range of British mammals with relative ease and in highly realistic and landscaped surroundings. We will have unrestricted access to photograph most species and can spend as much time as we like with any one. Specialities include the rare European beaver, wild boar, water shrews and pine marten.

As well as large mammals such as foxes, wild boar, muntjac deer, Scottish wildcat, polecat, weasel, stoats, edible dormice, sika deer, we will photograph various small mammals in specially designed sets. These will include species such as the rare water vole and equally rare water shrew.

Given the sheer wealth of opportunities at this venue and the distance from most centres of population this will be a two day course. You can be guaranteed to come back with a vast number of excellent and unique photos. This is one of my more popular workshops and in addition to groups of individual guests I regularly take groups from camera clubs or friends on special club trips here – all I need is 4 bookings to run a workshop just for you. With 6 – 8 people I can offer a reduced price. If you or your club are interested please do get in touch.

I have just started to offer 1-1 sessions at this centre too – if you are interested and perhaps want to explore a particular aspect of wildlife photography or technique please enquire for more information.

Dragonfly Photography Workshop

Dragonflies are a challenging but rewarding subject for the macro photographer. They are the animated flying jewels that are a true sign of summer in the British country side and make really interesting if not challenging subjects for photography.

This unique workshop is offered nowhere else and is run jointly with staff from the British Dragonfly Society (BDS) at Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire. With over 40 years’ experience as a wildlife and macro photographer I will provide the photographic tuition and the BDS staff will work with us helping us to find subjects to photograph, assisting with identification and background information and on these fascinating insects.

The day will start with an introduction to Dragonflies from the Project team and I will provide a practical introduction to the photographic techniques. The majority of the day will then be given over to photographing dragonflies and damselflies in the reserve and if required larvae in tanks in the Dragonfly Projects base. Group size will be kept to a minimum so that I can provide individual or small group tuition as required in the field and the BDS team will support us.

This is a very special workshop with unique opportunities to learn how to photograph a demanding subject, take some stunning photographs and learn more about these mesmeric creatures.
Insectivorous plants
A specialist macro workshop

This is a unique specialist workshop offered nowhere else. It is aimed at the keen photographer who wants to learn how to perfect their macro photography whilst capturing photographs of something very different. Insectivorous or carnivorous plants are a fantastic and fascinating subject and to really appreciate and capture an image of these small delicate plants you have to get very close and thus they are ideal subjects for macro work. I never have more than three and usually just 2 people per workshop so you will receive as much personal support and assistance as you require.

I have nearly 40 years of experience with macro photography and regularly give talks on the subject to camera clubs and other interested groups. I have teamed up with Andy Wilkinson the owner of Triffid Nurseries one of the country’s premier growers and breeders of these fascinating plants. He has one of the largest range of carnivorous plants available anywhere in the UK and with his help I am now able to offer the unique opportunity of unrestricted access to photograph a very wide range of superb specimens.

The day will start with a talk and short tour provided by Andy and the bulk of the day will be spent behind the camera. I will be available all day to support and teach new techniques or use of equipment or help you develop further specialist macro skills. In addition I bring some specialist macro equipment and lighting to each workshop to allow you to experiment with new and different equipment.

Autumn Fungi - Close up and Macro

Fungi are the perfect subject for the keen close up and macro photographer. They come in a huge variety of colours, shapes, and sizes and the peak autumn season reveals them at their best as wonderful subjects to photograph. Once you know where to look for them and have mastered the basic photographic and lighting techniques they are an excellent subject to practise and perfect your close up and macro photography skills.

For this workshop I have teamed up with Justin Long, an experienced mycologist, who has been studying fungi for around 15 years. He leads very popular adult education fungi forays and hosts events, forays and talks on fungi for a wide number of different groups and organisations. He is thus the perfect person to introduce us to this exciting subject and from whom to learn more about identifying different types of fungi including the dangers of certain varieties.

Through this workshop I will seek to introduce you to macro and close up photography and help you to understand just how easy and fun it is and can be. I will introduce you to some of my preferred techniques for photographing fungi looking to take best advantage of what natural light is available as well as how this can be augmented to optimise the settings the subjects are found in.

As I will be seeking to help you experiment with and learn new techniques I limit the number attending this workshop to a maximum of 8 so that I can spend as much time with each of you as you’d like or want.

Harvest Mice - Photo Workshop
As Britain’s smallest rodent harvest mice are the only old world mammal to have truly prehensile tails which they use to help them climb. They are extremely active and agile climbers feeding in the stalk zone of long grasses and reeds. I was introduced to this little mouse nearly 40 years ago and I have been fond of them ever since.

All this makes them fascinating and attractive subjects for wildlife photography. Having established a colony for a project I was working on I am now thrilled to be able to give others the opportunity to photograph them for themselves.

This is a chance to capture some really stunning images and to have some fun at the same time. The workshops are ½ day and I limit the numbers to 2 occasionally 3 per session to give you the best opportunities for photographs. I am offering the workshops at my house 12 miles North of Northampton within easy access to all the main routes and close to the A14, A1 and M1. Morning sessions run from 10am to 1pm and afternoon sessions run from 2pm to 5pm.

Owls and other Birds of Prey in Evening light

This workshop is deliberately scheduled to offer an opportunity to photograph the birds and especially owls into the magical evening light or “golden hour” in the summer. This session is scheduled to start at 2 PM and run through into mid evening finishing at about 7:30 PM.

This workshop is offered nowhere else and has been specially arranged by Natures Photos to allow you to shoot in that beautiful light that is only available in the summer. It is 5 hours and starts at 2:00pm running through till 7:30pm with a short break.

The workshop is offered only in the summer months and will last about 5 hours. It will start at 2 PM running through to mid evening to take best advantage of the evening light. 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. This session has been individually arranged for me and the people I take and thus respecting the centre’s staff particular bird lighting to suit

Leaving Auto mode and Taking Control of Your Camera
- Do you rely on the automatic modes on your camera but would like to learn to control your camera more?
- Do you want to achieve better results from your photographic efforts but are confused by how all those camera settings work?
- Do you want to unleash the power in your camera and achieve better results and photos but are not sure where to start?

**If so, then this workshop is just for you!**

Auto can be great, but it doesn't always get it right, and limits your creativity. With all the jargon and controls available on modern DSLR cameras photography can often seem very daunting. There are however only a few key controls and mastering these can completely alter the photos you take. I believe the best way to learn and to build your knowledge and confidence and take control of your camera is to practise. With a healthy mixture of classroom and practical sessions my aim on this workshop is to provide a relaxing and comfortable setting where you can learn more about your camera and practise your new knowledge by taking some stunning photos. You will learn how to control aperture, shutter speed and ISO to produce more creative images.

The workshop is based at Icarus Falconry, a private falconry centre where I run my very popular specialist raptor photo days. Having worked with and run workshops at the centre for many years I have excellent working arrangements with the falconers. Unlike most similar centres these birds are trained and actively used for hunting so are in excellent condition, very keen and fit making them excellent subjects for you to practise your new found skills.

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**Guided Wildlife Photo Tours**

**Wild Europe**

A 5 day escorted residential photographic workshop to photograph some of Europe’s most spectacular and enigmatic mammals in the Bavarian National Park.

Capture those “once in a life time” images of some of Europe’s most endangered and exciting species within the natural setting of the Bavarian Forest National Park. Grey wolves, brown bears, lynx, beavers and wild boar will be our main subjects on this unique workshop tour but within the Park we will be able to photograph over 30 additional species of mountain and forest animals. These additional species include otters, European bison, wildcat, red deer, elk and birds such as capercaillie, black grouse and hazelhen and numerous birds of prey.

To run this very special photographic workshop I have teamed up with Gerhard Schwab a leading mammal ecologist who has worked extensively with Europe’s endangered mammals. Living in the area and as the current head of Southern Bavarian Beaver Management Group he knows this area and its iconic mammals better than most. We couldn’t ask for a more qualified and enthusiastic local guide.

In addition to Gerhard I will have an assistant wildlife photographer to work with me to help you develop and grow your skills in wildlife photography. For those interested the Bavarian Forest also provides excellent opportunities for landscape photography.

**Guided Photo Safaris**
I have excellent and long standing relationships with the camps I use in Africa and the tour operator I use in the UK. I am thus able to support you in achieving once in a lifetime photos and to provide unique and amazing experiences. With my knowledge of the area, contacts and local experience I am also able to offer all my Africa trips at a significantly reduced price. My trip to unique private conservancies bordering the Massai Mara is almost £1,000 less than similar trips and my very special Southern Tanzanian safari is available nowhere else.

**The Big Cats of the Massai Mara - Rolling Plains of Africa**

An escorted photographic workshop to Kenya's famous Massai Mara region.

9 nights – February March

The Massai Mara is deservedly known as Africa’s greatest wildlife reserve, and is famous for the abundance of lion, the other big cats, the Great Wildebeest Migration and the Masai people. It is without a doubt Africa’s most well known and famous safari destination. The area has become well know having featured in many excellent TV programmes including the BBC’s long running “Big Cat Diaries” and “Big Cat Week” as well as the more recent Disney Nature’s “African Cats”. Staying in luxury bush camps the big cats will definitely be on our agenda but we will also have ample opportunities to photograph the wide variety of other wildlife this area supports.

The drivers and local guides are very well known to me – I have worked with them for over 10 years. They are well versed in the requirements of photographers. They know when and where to stop their vehicles, how to best position them for the available light and are prepared to wait in any location for as long as you require. Unlike many other African safaris it is never my aim so see as many species as possible but rather to spend time observing animals and birds behaving naturally and take the very best photos. As well as the cats such as Lion, Leopard, Cheetah, Serval, Caracal the rich plains around the camp support an abundance of grazing animals, including sizeable Elephant herds, Cape Buffalo, Giraffe, Zebra and a variety of antelope. You should also see Hyena and Jackal, Hippopotamus, Baboon, Vervet Monkeys, Crocodile, Warthog and smaller mammals such as Mongoose. There are also a host of different bird species, over 500 different species have been recorded in the area including 50 species of raptors.

We’ll spend seven nights in the Kicheche Mara Camp on the very edge of the Massai Mara. This magical camp benefits from being in the Mara conservancy but not in the Massai Mara game reserve proper which provides for the same wildlife experiences and a far better chance of more personal, calmer encounters without masses of vehicles surrounding you.

We use specialist adapted, for photographers, 4WD Land cruisers. We have vehicles, guides and drivers specifically allocated to our trip and having no more than 4 guests per vehicle will ensure you plenty of room for your photographic equipment and excellent wildlife viewing and photography.

At the end of the trip there is an optional opportunity to visit the world famous Daphne Sheldrike elephant orphanage where I have arranged a VIP visit. During such visits there are a limited number of visitors and we will watch and interact with the baby elephants as they are fed and return to their stalls for the night.
Northern Tanzania – Wildebeest Southern Migration and Ngoro Ngoro Carter.

A private guided photographic workshop timed for late February early March when every year roughly 1.5 million wildebeest gather on the short grass plains of the Southern Serengeti to give birth.

Extraordinarily over 500,000 calves are born in the space of a few weeks. The spectacle is truly breath taking and as the plains cover many thousands of square miles the sense of space is overwhelming. The predators, especially the cats, take advantage of this proliferation of young animals and this is an excellent area to see cheetah, leopard, lions and hyena. At this time of year vultures and other carrion eaters gather in large numbers as part of nature’s efforts to keep the plains clean. We will also search for the smaller but equally interesting animals such as servals, caracals, striped hyenas and bat-eared foxes.

We will spend the majority of our time in the Ndutu area staying in a luxury tented and comfortable safari camp overlooking the lake Ndutu and the Ndutu plains. You will be able to watch game whilst you eat your meals or sup a drink at the bar! The camp is situated in an area right at the southernmost end of the Serengeti but crucially outside the reserve boundaries thus permitting off road driving. It’s in the very centre of the Wildebeest birthing plains and is often referred to as the Secret Serengeti.

During the trip we will also visit Lake Manyara National Park and Olduvai Gorge. We will also spend nearly 2 days in the world famous Ngoro Ngoro Carter, eight wonder of the world with its abundance of game and predators.

Optional extension to Northern Tanzanian Safari – Gorilla Trekking in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest of Uganda.

No other wildlife encounter in Africa matches the astounding experience of spending time face-to-face with wild gorillas. Gorillas are a species are on the brink of extinction and treks are a highly restricted activity. Encountering our distant cousins in mist-draped forests of Bwindi’s impenetrable forest is truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Our professional guide and trackers will lead us into the forest’s secret paths, looking for a habituated gorilla family. Once found, we will approach the gorillas quietly and settle down to observe them from between 7 and 10m away.

I keep this trip to a minimum number of guests so that I can give everyone all the help and support they need to come home with some amazing shots of these incredible primates.
Botswana - the Elephant Safari.

A private guided photographic workshop to two of Botswana’s finest areas for elephant, birdlife, big cats and other game.

As a wildlife photographer with a passion for Africa the challenge is always to find a location near enough to airports to enable you to take your heavy camera gear but sufficiently isolated to ensure unspoilt game viewing in unspoilt areas. For this safari we are concentrating on the waterways of Botswana a country with some of the most expansive untamed areas left in Africa with thousands of square miles of pristine, unspoilt African wilderness. As a destination it is ideally suited to photograph wildlife, from the smallest insects and most colourful birds to the big cats, largest herbivores and most elusive predators. In particular it is well known as a superb destination for elephants.

We are starting on the banks of the Chobe in the north east of the country. Most visitors to the area stay in the large lodges neighbouring Kasane on the Eastern side of the park and set out each day from there. This does mean however that they can’t travel very far and simply don’t experience the magic of the area without being amongst crowds of other vehicles. I solve this by using a private mobile camp erected just for us and run by Dave Carson. Dave is a highly qualified Zimbabwe professional safari guide I have used for a number of years. The birdlife, especially along the river, is spectacular but the Chobe is perhaps more famous for its large herds, especially of elephant and buffalo, which frequent the river courses. Elephants swimming in the river are a great attraction and something we will definitely seek to target and photograph. In addition to elephant the area has large populations of all the herbivores and the predators who feed on them. Amongst the 16 antelope species found in the area, greater kudu are common, and the near endemic puku and Chobe bushbuck can also be seen.

For the second part we stay 2 nights in the luxury of Pangolin Chobe lodge. From here we will embark on two 1/2 day boating safaris, in specially adapted private chartered photo boats. This is always the highlight of this trip. The unique boat has been specifically designed for photographers. It has a flat bottom, to navigate extremely shallow waters and half a ton of lead for stability. It has just one row of revolving seats, each equipped with an adjustable Wimberley-type heads making it possible to photograph with a mounted camera and long lens. This will provide us with unique opportunities for some stunning pictures. There is a short YouTube™ video on my website showing this boat on my website page referring to this safari. If reading this electronically please click here to be taken straight to it.

After 6 days (5 nights) in the Chobe National Park we will transfer by light aircraft for the third part of our trip to the private Khwai concession in the world famous Okavango Delta. With unfenced neighbours such as the Moremi Game Reserve and Chobe National Park, this 180,000-hectare area is considered one of the prime safari destinations on fringes of the Okavango Delta. The Khwai River that flows through the concession mirrors the surrounding marshlands and the riverbanks. The dry savannahs are abundantly populated with roan and sable antelope, buffalo, zebra, and giraffe among others. The concession’s elephant herds are widespread, as are the different predator groups such as lion, leopard, spotted hyena, the endangered African wild dog, and cheetah.
Southern Tanzania – An unspoilt photographer’s paradise.

An escorted photographic workshop to a truly unspoilt photographer’s paradise.

Many of the more well known East African safari destinations are becoming over crowded. Their sheer popularity and coverage on TV is becoming a problem for photographers wishing to observe wildlife in a more natural setting without the disturbance posed by other vehicles or photographers.

By comparison Southern Tanzania is far less often visited by the western tourist but yet has some largest and best preserved parks in East Africa. The region offers the real bush wilderness experience in an area with some of the purest remaining tracts of unspoilt game parks in Africa. It is home to a select group of national parks and reserves covering truly huge areas.

This is a photographic exploration of two of Africa’s finest wildlife areas - the vast Selous Game Reserve and wild Ruaha National Park. We’ll be staying in two small camps, both of which offer high standards of wildlife guiding and accommodation. In both camps we’ll have our own open safari vehicles for all game drives. I deliberately limit the number of guests on the trip to 8 with no more than 4 per vehicle (or boat in Selous) thus ensuring each of you a prime seat in specialised open sided 4WD vehicles / boats with plenty of additional room available for equipment.

We spend the first part of the trip in the Selous exploring the Rufiji River (East Africa’s greatest waterway) and surrounding woodlands by boat and by vehicle. On the water you will have unrivalled opportunities to shoot crocodile, hippo, elephant and water birds like the Goliath heron, many different kingfishers, bee eaters storks and waders all at eye level. The area is also well known for its African Fish Eagle population who will fly near to the boats and call from the tops of the borassus palms that dot the lake sides. From land we will look for the unique antelope of the area, giraffe herds and big cats.

After Selous we head for Ruaha for a completely different region, habitat and wildlife for further spectacular wildlife viewing and photography. Ruaha National Park has been dubbed the undiscovered gem of Tanzania and is often called “Tanzania’s best kept secret”. Situated far off the beaten track, away from crowds this rough tract of wilderness pulsates the real energy of an Africa long-forgotten. Visitors come to Ruaha to enjoy the dramatic landscapes and abundance of wildlife, with well-maintained roads and few visitors. Dramatic landscapes, a huge variety of plant and bird life and an abundance of animals make Ruaha the perfect safari destination.

Using specialist guides and fully open 4WD vehicles we will explore this area and its dry river beds where animals concentrate at this time of year. Ruaha has Africa’s highest density of lions and for many years Ruaha was known for it’s huge elephant populations and “big-tuskers” (old male bull elephants with gigantic tusks). The world’s second heaviest pair of tusks on record came from one of Ruaha’s big tuskers (one tusk weighing over 91kg). In 1970 there were an estimated 40,000 elephants in Ruaha. Sadly by the late 1980’s the elephant population had dwindled to somewhere as low as 4,000 due to ruthless poaching. With the help of an excellent park warden Ruaha was able to curb the poaching and now boasts a good elephant population estimated somewhere between 15,000 & 20,000.

Safaris in these two areas of Southern Tanzania offer the true bush wilderness experience in an area with some of the purest remaining tracts of unspoilt game viewing in Africa. This is what all photographic safaris ought to be like.

1-1 and non-photographic safaris.
As a lifelong naturalist, wildlife photographer, tour leader and experienced East African guide I regularly run private safaris either for photographers wanting a particular experience or a group just wanting a magnificent and unique safari experience. I can arrange individual safaris looking for particular species or experiences (e.g. migration crossings) or for guests wanting an individual introduction or exploration of this magnificent country. I run specialist photographic safaris providing 1-1 tuition or for families or groups of friends just wanting a private safari.

The lodges, safaris and routes I use are selected by me with the assistance of the UK based company and experts in the region, Safari Consultants. Choosing the right company to arrange your African safari is vitally important and the complexity and remoteness of Africa means you need a company who have detailed knowledge and first-hand experience of Africa. Safari Consultants are just such a specialist company having specialised in safaris to East and Southern Africa since 1983. They are a company which wants to take the time to understand guests’ requirements and desires and has the ability to create the perfect itinerary to match. The essence of a safari as organised by me and Safari Consultants is that you can enjoy luxury combined with a real wilderness experience in privacy and comfort.

I am a lifelong naturalist who has never lost my wonder for the natural world nor my early interest in wildlife and wildlife behaviour. This started in the early 60’s when I was fortunate to spend a number of years living in Kenya and I have held a fascination with Africa and its wildlife ever since. I take it as a real privilege to run trips and am passionate about sharing my enthusiasm for Africa and its wildlife with guests.