

**Please forward this to anyone you think might be interested**

... and, of course, if you'd prefer not to receive future newsletters from Kim, please just "Reply" with "Unsubscribe please" as the subject. Thanks 😊

# Newsletter from Kim Westerskov

Email: [kimsworkshops@gmail.com](mailto:kimsworkshops@gmail.com)

Web: [www.kimwesterskov.com](http://www.kimwesterskov.com)

20 Greerton Road, Tauranga 3112, New Zealand

Phone 07-578-5138

## Newsletter #60 – October 2017

1. Checklist: Before you press the shutter
2. Dust on your sensor
3. Photos from previous workshops
4. From Kim's Field Diaries – subantarctic Bounty Islands
5. "Great Photography Weekend" – 14-15 October
6. 2017 programme
7. Professional photo critiques
8. Bird photography competition
9. Quote of the Month
- 10-14. Coaching, Mentoring, Meetings & Tuition

*This newsletter goes out to many photographers in New Zealand and overseas - and to anybody who asks to go onto the mailing list. If you know anybody who would like to be on the mailing list, please get them to email me. It's free and they can unsubscribe at any time, of course.*



*Creche of fur seal pups, subantarctic Bounty Islands*

## 1. CHECKLIST: BEFORE YOU PRESS THE SHUTTER

There is no app for great photography. You can't Google "great photography" and be doing it by dinnertime. It's deeper and richer and much, much more rewarding than that. Much more fun. It's not paint by numbers. It's not "Kim says Aperture Priority and f5.6 and ISO200 and 28mm, focussing a third of the way into the picture and sticking to the rule of thirds with a leading line or two". It's your photography, your way.

"That's all very well Kim, but what about some tips today?" OK, how about this: a checklist of things that should be running through your mind before pressing the shutter.

If you're a competent photographer, you're probably already doing these things, even without thinking. If "I already know this, thanks Kim" then feel free to move straight on to the next article 😊

After a while, you'll be doing these things without even thinking, but for starters – or every now and then – run through this list in your mind. NOTE – this is a cut-down version of a longer list that I give out as a handout at some of my workshops. It's not a complete list [a list of everything worth considering before clicking the shutter would be pages long]. These are the main things.

1. What is it in the scene in front of me that interests me the most? Is it a single subject, or a number of subjects, or a detail, or the atmosphere, or the overall scene, or what?
2. How can I best photograph that subject? Do I want the subject big in the frame, or small, or what? Should I be closer? Further away? To the left a bit? To the right?
3. If it's a photo of a subject [e.g. person, animal], look carefully at the **background** and identify and eliminate distractions [by removing the distractions physically, or moving yourself so the distraction is not visible in the photo]. A shallow depth of field [e.g. f2.8 or f4] makes the background fuzzy and so distractions are less irritating – but are usually still there. A wide depth of field [e.g. f16, f22] will usually give you a sharp background if you're not focussed too close.
4. What **lens** is best for this photo? Tele or wide angle or normal? Am I after a "single subject" photo, or a storytelling wide angle photo? [I'll cover lens choice in an upcoming newsletter]
5. **Composition** good? Subject in the centre - or off to one side? Balance all the subjects [if more than one]. Could it be simpler? Is there anything that distracts from the main point of the photo?
6. Am I in the right exposure mode [Auto, Aperture Priority, Manual, Special Scene...]
7. **Focus**. Is it appropriate? Autofocus? Which bit **must** be in focus [eyes must always be in focus]
8. What else: Exposure? Exposure compensation? Depth of field? Image stabilisation? RAW/JPEG?
9. Holding the camera still? Tripod needed? Or hold the camera against something solid for stability?

## 2. DUST ON YOUR SENSOR?

A photographer contacted me recently, very worried about the amount of dust he was getting on his sensor. My response: Don't worry too much about it. I get dust on mine all the time. If I'm out in interesting locations getting good photos and changing lenses often, then I get dust on my sensors. Regularly. It's just an occupational hazard. Easily got rid of in Lightroom or Photoshop. My advice: worry less about technical stuff like that – or buying lenses marginally sharper than your current one – or shooting at f8/f11 and avoiding f22 because of diffraction etc etc. – worry more about getting photos with impact, photos with soul, photos that say something worth saying. That's roughly my philosophy. And yes, every now and then I get the sensor properly cleaned, in my case by Canon or at Carters Photographics here in Tauranga.

### 3. PHOTOS FROM PREVIOUS WORKSHOPS

Ever wondered what Kim's photo workshops look like? What kind of people come? What they do? Here's some photos from my workshops over the last few years.



Photos by Gerard Pollock, Tony Whitehead and Kim



#### 4. FROM KIM'S FIELD DIARIES – SUBANTARCTIC BOUNTY ISLANDS – part 1



I love islands. Always have. Especially faraway, hard-to-get-to islands. Between Campbell Island deep in the Furious Fifties and the Kermadec Islands in the balmy subtropics, the hardest New Zealand islands to get to would have to be the Bounty Islands. They are a long way from anywhere, the weather is rarely great [they lie in open ocean in the Roaring Forties], difficult to land on and offer no anchorages or real shelter of any kind.

Calling them “islands” is stretching the normal definition of the word “island” too. “Islets” or simply “rocks” would be closer to the reality.

They lie 670 km east-south-east of the South Island, and 530 km south-west of the Chatham Islands. There’s 22 of them, a mere 135 hectares in total. The largest one, Depot Island, is 700 metres long and 400 metres across at its widest point. Its highest point is 48 metres above the breakers. The tallest is Molly Cap, some 70 metres high.

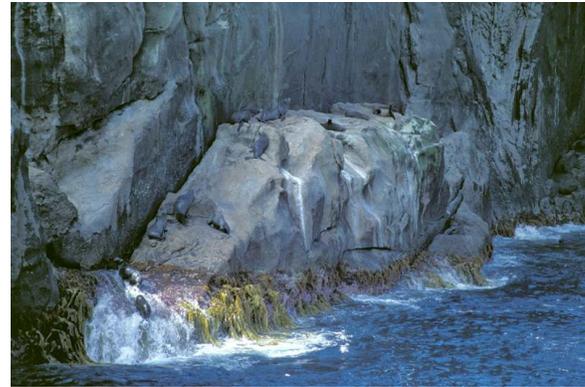
The rock is granite, 180 million years old, and there is virtually no soil or vegetation. There are no beaches or easy landing spots either. So, who would ever want to go there? “Me, me, me!” A photo I’d seen in a book of the barren granite slopes of these islands covered in seals, albatrosses and penguins had become my siren song. The place called me. Insistently. It took years to get there, but eventually I did.



The first of our five scheduled days at the Bounty Islands was hardly auspicious. Strong winds and a moderate swell meant that neither Monowai's helicopter or quiver of small boats could get us ashore. So we cooled our heels as Monowai steamed back and forth off the islands, continually taking soundings of these poorly charted waters. The only navigation chart for this area was based on a motley assortment of maps and soundings, many 100-200 years old, and all highly suspect. On this chart the islands are obviously the wrong shape and reefs are shown that since seem to have disappeared.



I asked the Monowai's navigator about these phantom reefs and he thought that two or three of them were probably all the same reef. Hastily-taken bearings, often in foul weather, by different navigators in the days of yore could easily account for one single reef becoming several on a composite chart. But Monowai was taking no chances, and kept well clear of these areas until all the surrounding areas had been covered. Then it cautiously nosed in closer and closer to the phantom reefs. By the time we left the Bounty Islands, most of the surrounding areas had been charted accurately, but unknown areas still exist around these mystery reefs.

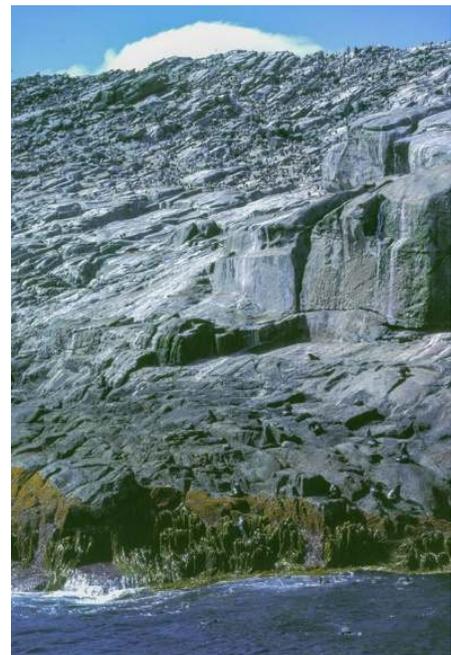
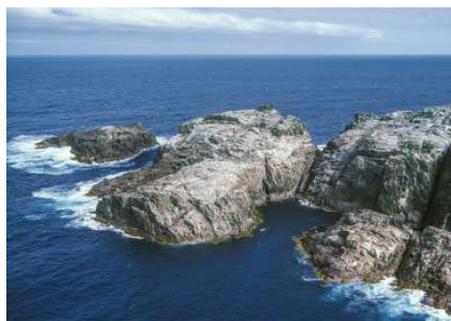


The second day brought us no joy either – strong winds and a moderate swell still. Just normal weather for the Bounties. So too the third day, and although the helicopter managed to get a few people ashore, the photographer/marine biologist/underwater cameraman [me] was not included. We were scheduled to have five days at the Bounty Islands. For four of those, we wallowed in the ocean swells around the islands, waiting for wind and swell to drop. Waiting, waiting ..... and getting increasingly frustrated and bored.

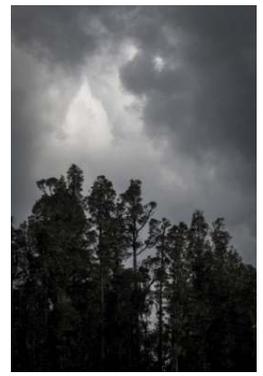


The weather wasn't our only problem. The helicopter had developed an oil leak which, although not dangerous, severely limited the time it could spend in the air. A welcome supply of the precious oil was flown from the mainland by a Royal New Zealand Air Force Orion and parachuted to the Monowai on the third day.

I finally got three hours ashore. I'll tell you about them in the next newsletter.



5. "GREAT PHOTOGRAPHY WEEKEND" 14-15 October



If you're thinking something like "hmmm, maybe I'd like to go to one of Kim's workshops sometime, but which one?" then this is the one I'd most recommend. Over two days we'll cover enough to inspire you for the next 12 months and well beyond. And it's different from all the other workshops I run. Instead of covering just one topic, we spread our wings wider, touching on many of the topics covered in my workshops & tuition over the last 10 years. **"Will I learn a lot?" "Yep". "Will it be fun?" "I'm afraid so!"**

This is the biggest workshop I run, **a full weekend of workshop, field trips and people photography, followed by an assignment and an evaluation evening** about 3 weeks later at a time that suits everyone. Learning is via many paths: a creative mix of modules with detailed hand-outs, live demonstrations, screen-projected images, questions answered, and taking real photos in the field.

The weekend touches many different aspects of photography:

- Landscapes & seascapes
- Wildlife photography
- Photographing people
- Travel photography
- Composition, depth of field
- Which lens to use? Telephoto vs. normal vs. wide angle. Using each for best effect
- Wedding photography
- Going professional or semi-professional - or not
- Photo competitions – should you enter? What do the judges look for?
- Copyright, legal stuff, model and property releases
- Specialised techniques for night/dusk photography and aerial photography
- Digital workflow, backing up, archiving
- That troublesome triangle of ISO/aperture/shutter speed - often not understood well [if at all] but absolutely vital if you want real control over your photography
- Photoshop & Lightroom
- Manual or Auto or ....?
- What makes powerful photos powerful?
- Harnessing & developing your creativity
- Silky waterfalls, long exposure photos
- Dealing with problem foregrounds... and more



**\*\* Cost:** The standard price is **\$445**, reducing to **\$395 for EarlyBird** registrations [for those booking before 6<sup>th</sup> October. The price includes the two full days of workshop, follow-up meeting, detailed hand-outs, and yummy catering [courtesy of Vivienne] on both days. **You will feel well looked after.** Special rate for **fulltime students** with ID **\$195**.

For anyone living outside the Tauranga area, there are three good motels [and various eating establishments] within 10 minutes' walk of Kim's studio. The workshops are held at Kim's comfortable studio at 18 Greerton Road, Gate Pa, Tauranga.



## 6. 2017 PROGRAMME

### OCTOBER

- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday-Sunday 14-15 October. “Great Photography Weekend” workshop.** Weekend + follow-up.
- **Saturday 28 October. “Photography 101” workshop.** Half day.

### NOVEMBER

- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.
- **Saturday 18 November. “Close-up Magic – with or without a macro lens” workshop.** Full day.

### DECEMBER

- Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December. “Photos & Coffee” informal meeting. 7.00 – 10.00pm. Free.

Half-day workshops 9.00am – 1.00pm

Full day & two day workshops 9.00am – 5.00pm

**COST:** Course fees include tuition, detailed hand-outs & yummy catering, plus assignment and follow-up evenings for full day and two-day workshops.

- **Half day workshops:** \$135 – or \$115 for Early Birds if you register by 10 days before workshop. Fulltime students with ID \$70.
- **One day workshops:** \$295 – or \$245 for Early Birds if you register by 10 days before workshop. Fulltime students with ID \$150.
- **Weekend workshops:** \$445 [\$395 Early Bird]. Fulltime students with ID \$195.

## 7. PROFESSIONAL PHOTO CRITIQUES

“It’s really hard getting honest critiques about my photos. I can get “Likes” or smiley faces on social media easily enough, but that doesn’t help me get any better”.

If that sounds like you, here’s two good ideas:

1. Come along to one of our “Photos & Coffee” evenings on the first Tuesday of every month. You’ll get real – and at the same time positive – feedback. Free [always a good price point]
2. If you’d like more in-depth critiquing of your photos, then that is one of the services I offer [it’s been offered on my website for some years now]. It’s at your level, so it will never be too technical for you. In my own photography, I’m usually asking myself “What’s the simplest way I can achieve the photos I’m after?” I’m definitely not into making things any more technical than they need to be.

“**Photo Critiques by Kim**” can either be in person or via email. Photo critiquing is often a significant part of private tuition, and so you have the choice of private tuition [see below] or the standalone “Photo Critiques by Kim” service. As an experienced judge of many photo competitions [including four years judging the New Zealand Geographic Photographer of the Year competition] this service can be very useful for photographers wishing to enter photo competitions. Or if you’re wondering about submitting photos to a publisher or other potential client. Or even if you simply want to “get better”.

You’ll receive either a verbal assessment [if you visit me at my studio] or a written assessment [if it’s by email]. Or it can be by phone if you wish. My critique will include suggestions for shooting and photo-editing technique improvements that will help you take your photography to the next level.

Prices:

5 photos: \$70

10 photos: \$125

15 photos: \$175

Interested? Email me at [kimsworkshops@gmail.com](mailto:kimsworkshops@gmail.com) or ring 07-578-5138.

## 8. BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

If you've got some photos of New Zealand birds you're rather proud of, you might be interested in this competition. There's three sections and good prizes:

1. Wild birds anywhere in New Zealand
2. New Zealand birds photographed by young photographer - up to 18 years old
3. Birds of Whakatane Harbour [time to visit this harbour perhaps?]

The overall winner receives \$500 in real hard cash, while First, Second, and Third in each category receive \$200, \$150, and \$100 respectively. Plus – all entrants who attend the prizegiving ceremony go into a draw to win one of two gift vouchers to a Kim Westerskov photo workshop, valued at \$295 each. Entries close 6 October 2017 [soon!] The prize giving is on 13 October 2017 at 5:30pm at the Whakatāne I-Site

Go to: <https://www.facebook.com/BirdsAplentyPhotoCompetition/>  
<http://www.whakatane.com/events/festivals-and-shows/birdsaplenty-festival>  
Find out more and enter online <https://goo.gl/N37KrC>

## 9. QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“So maybe photography ... is sorta like fly-fishing. It's about being there. It really doesn't matter what you catch. It's more like a meditation, and rather than “capturing” the soul of something, you are actually restoring your own”

“Photography is a way of stopping time so you can take a closer look”

Paul Ambrose [Durango, Colorado, USA]

## 10. PHOTOGRAPHING ARTWORKS, PHOTOSHOPPING, PHOTO RESTORATION

As well as teaching photography and mentoring a number of photographers, I also offer photo restoration, Photoshopping, and “Photographing your Artworks” services. \$50 per hour [we usually get a lot done each hour].

## 11. INVITATION TO ALL CAMERA CLUBS & GROUPS

If your club or group might be interested in hosting one of my presentations - or workshops - or “Field Trip + Photo Critique” days, please get in touch.

## 12. MENTORING

“Mentoring” is the ongoing process of **inspiring, advising, guiding, teaching, critiquing** ... whatever is needed for the ongoing development of a photographer. It’s one-on-one, so it’s different for each person. One month it may be about equipment or Photoshop, next month it may be “I just want my photos to have more ‘Wow’ in them”, the following month it may be about exhibitions or “Should I go pro?”. **Who is mentoring for? Anybody. At present I’m mentoring both established professional photographers and amateurs.**



Photos of Kim by Malcolm Macfarlane & Tony Whitehead

1. At least 90 minutes [probably more] of my time every month. \$115/month.
2. At least 3 hours of my time [probably more] every month. \$165/ month.
3. At least 4 hours of my time [probably more] every month. \$200/ month.

Your mentor [me, Kim]:

- Over 30 years as a professional photographer
- Five First Prizes in the BBC “Wildlife Photographer of the Year” competition, the Olympics [or Oscars] of nature photography worldwide.
- 18 books published – written and photographed by me.
- **Passionate about photography and passionate about inspiring, guiding, and supporting photographers.**

## 13. KIM’S PHOTOS & COFFEE EVENINGS

We meet on the first Tuesday of each month [except January], chat informally about photography, and view some of the recent photos we’ve taken. It’s **free [no charge], supper is served**, and there’s no obligation of any kind. **Please email me if you’d like to come.** These evenings are always fun and friendly. It’s a great way of meeting up with like-minded people, **being inspired by the creativity of our group of photographers, and coming away with news ideas and tips.** Bring photos if you wish, but there’s no obligation to bring any. The next one is on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, starting 7.00pm. 18 Greerton Road, Tauranga.

## 14. COACHING, PRIVATE TUITION

Yes, like you I’m usually busy doing “other stuff” too, but I can nearly always fit private tuition in, and am very happy to do so. First 2 hours: \$80 per hour, after that \$70 per hour. If you come again, it’s \$70 per hour right from the first hour.

All photos by Kim Westerskov except where noted.  
Photos copyright © Kim Westerskov  
& copyright © the individual photographers named.  
All rights reserved