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... 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

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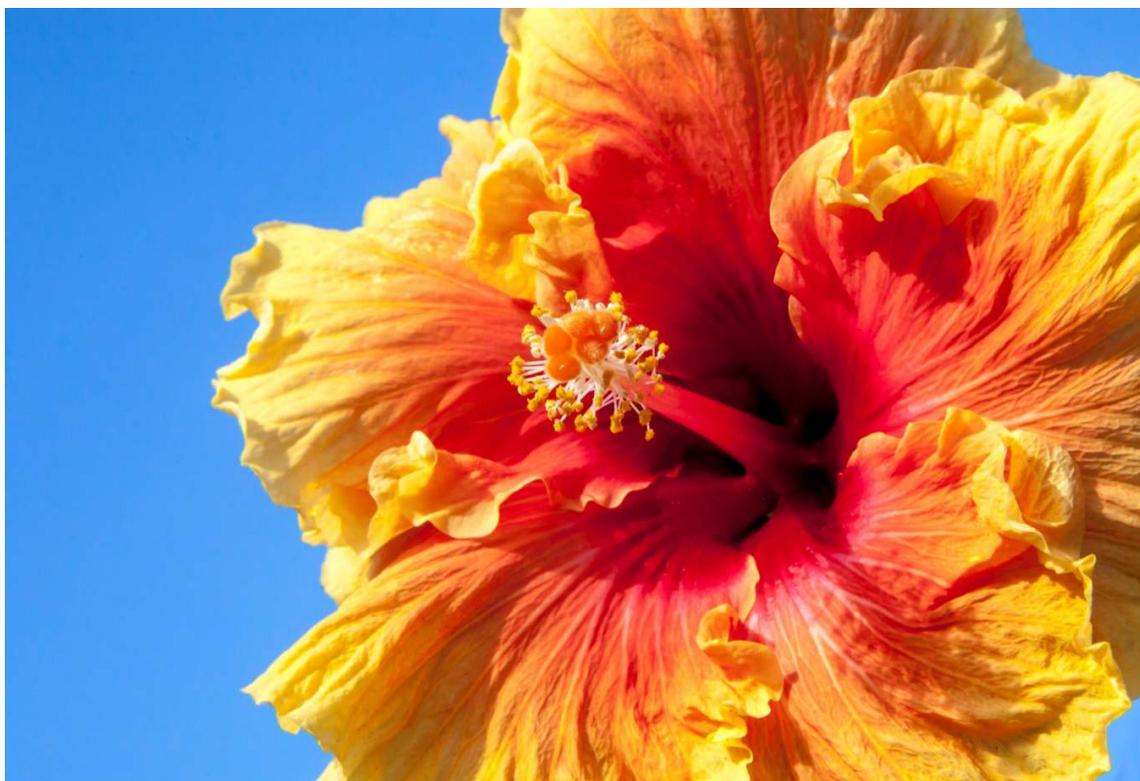
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Newsletter #84 – April 2020

## THE STAY-AT-HOME EDITION

1. Photography at home
2. Close up photography tip
3. Other photo projects during the lockdown
4. The road to Piha

*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.*



*Photographed right here at our home*

## PHOTOGRAPHY AT HOME

So here we are in uncharted territory. Uncharted territory is certainly going to mean some bad stuff of many kinds [it already has, and will continue to do so], changes of many kinds [some temporary, some long term] but also – almost certainly – some good stuff too. It's too early to be talking too loudly about "good stuff", so let's just whisper it: "*There will be good stuff!*". What kinds? That's entirely up to you, me, and all of us. Some we can guess at, some will surprise us. It will be whatever we make it. It will almost certainly include more of a sense of community, of looking out for each other and not just ourselves. Which has to be an excellent start.

This is a newsletter for all kinds of photographers [from seasoned professionals – hi Derek – hi Craig] to raw beginners and some for whom a cell phone is their only camera. So if you're reading this, you're most likely a photographer of some kind. Most of you would probably call yourselves "keen amateurs". Keen is good. Amateur is good. As well as a professional [I make my living from it] I'm equally an amateur – I do it because I love it. I do it for the joy of it, for the places and experiences it leads me to, for the buzz of creativity, and for the times I realize I've created [or at least recorded] something special.

To state the obvious, photography is never going to be called an "essential service" [apart from police forensic photography, and I have no desire to do that], and nor should it get in the way of the most important things for you and me in the coming weeks:

- To stay home
- To look after ourselves and our loved ones
- To be kind, not only to others but to yourself. Maybe more than usual
- To do what needs to be done to get rid of you-know-what as quickly as we can
  
- And to not get "cabin fever" [going nuts by being cooped up somewhere too long].





Most of you reading this will have gardens around your homes. Gardens with flowers and maybe ferns, grasses, bushes, and trees. During the early part of my career, I put considerable effort into getting to cold, wet, windy, inhospitable places such as Antarctica and the subantarctic islands – only occasionally heading to tropical waters to swim with whales and sharks.

As I've survived all that without too much damage to my body [lots of lost, wrecked and flooded cameras though] I gradually moved to another phase: still photographing the beauty and diversity of nature [and, OK, people occasionally] without moving too far from home. A field trip for me now is a week or two camped in my van anywhere along the magnificent west Auckland coastline [Muriwai, Bethells, Piha, Karekare, Whatipu] and you've been seeing the photos from these trips in these newsletters. But most of the time I'm here at home in a quiet suburb of Tauranga where I live with Vivienne, Gareth, and Anne.

Viv tends to her flower garden and I often find myself walking between our house and my office next door, thinking "Gee, the sunlight is catching those flowers beautifully – where's my camera". Or ditto around my other office down at the back of the section where I've planted ferns, tree-ferns, tussocks, and other natives around the "log cabin in the woods" [in suburban Tauranga]. I mention this because I've found deep wells of treasures [photographically speaking] right here among Viv's Cosmos and other flowers, and also my ferns and tussocks.





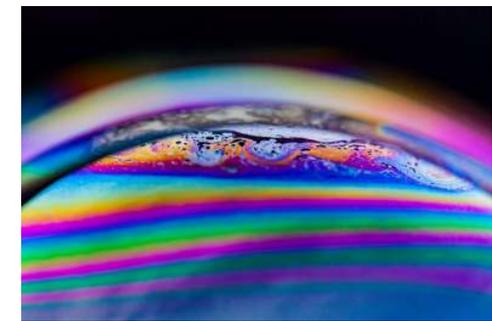
As many of you know, our garden is never particularly tidy – we’ll never be a candidate for open days at the upcoming Tauranga Garden and Art Festival – but there’s almost always SOMETHING well worth photographing.

**Nearly every photo in this newsletter was taken right here on our property.** The only exceptions are those in the Piha road article and two cloud photos where I walked across the road from our house for a better view of the sky [fewer powerlines]. Earlier in my career, I would have been too focussed on “How can I get to the subantarctic islands again, or – failing that – on a dive trip to somewhere interesting” to have taken too much notice of photo possibilities right here in our garden.

This ended up being a longer-than-planned introduction to “If you’re confined to home for a month or more – what can you find to photograph around your home?”

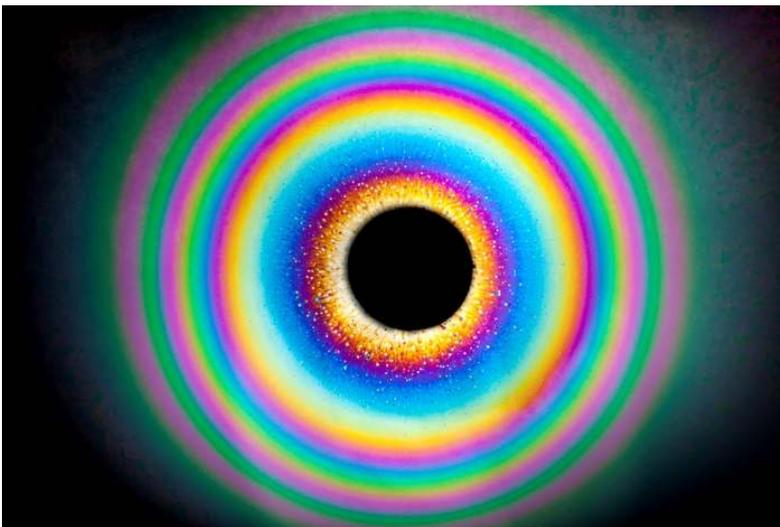
So if I can find so much beauty and interest in our garden here, I’m confident that many or most of you can do likewise. Grab that camera. Go out into the garden. Spend some hours there. Don’t just photograph the obvious things but see if you can get creative with blurred foregrounds, ICM [intentional camera movements], shooting into the light [towards the sun], raindrops on the leaves and flowers [your garden hose is a perfectly acceptable source of raindrops if the sky is clear] and more. Surprise yourself. Have fun. Send some to me maybe. I’d definitely be interested.

Look up at the sky occasionally too. Tauranga [and probably most places in New Zealand] often has wonderful clouds [they seem to be getting more beautiful each year], sunsets, and reasonably clear night



skies. Yes you can photograph the stars from your backyard on clear nights. I have. John H. has.

And don't forget the many photo possibilities you can find indoors: family "doing stuff" [reading, cooking, eating, watching telly, goofing around, whatever], the way the light comes in the window lighting up something for a few minutes, close-up photography of soap bubbles, or sunlight through glasses on the table ....







## 2. CLOSE UP PHOTOGRAPHY

### THE BIG SECRET OF “VERY CLOSE-UP” PHOTOGRAPHY

Fill the frame, totally [unless you want to leave a small amount of background sky or green vegetation in it as a kind of visual anchor]. You want the viewer to believe in the world inside the photo, to not think that there is a world outside. So – get close, very close. If your equipment cannot get close enough, get a close-up lens or extension tubes or macro lens – or simply crop what you can take. Unless you’re planning on a big print for your wall, modern digital cameras take such good photos that you can crop 90% out, and what you are left with is often [usually] good enough for most normal uses [sharing with friends, small prints, small in self-published books].



### 3. OTHER PHOTO PROJECTS DURING LOCKDOWN

If you're reading this, then you've got an internet connection. If you have an internet connection, then the whole internet is open to you. Which means you can, among countless other things:

1. Read some previous newsletters at <http://kimwesterskov.com/newsletter/> There are lots of articles, tips, & photos there. I might just collate them all into a book sometime. But what should I call it?
2. Learn some new stuff, especially the "I've been meaning for ages to learn more about Lightroom, or composition, or aperture .... or whatever" stuff. If your Lightroom skills need some polishing, Google "Julianne Kost Lightroom tutorials". Julianne is excellent, has hundreds of good tutorials, and the price is good [free].
3. Tidy up any of your digital photo collections that need tidying up.
4. Catch up on all that editing and image editing. I came home from my last Piha/Whatipu trip with 11,352 photos. [Yes I know!]. I'm not even halfway through them yet.
5. And what about doing something with your good photos? A photo book nowadays is pretty easy to create, can happily be done online, and the results [depending on the quality of the photos you give them] are usually either good or very good. There are many book printers who will happily take your photos and your money and send you the book a week or two later: Diamond Photo in Auckland [inexpensive, and usually good], Snapfish, Blurb ...
6. And/or get your best photos out doing "other stuff". I'll be using the time to get proposals to a book publisher and a major magazine, as well as getting my old surfing photos [already scanned] tidied up and onto a website [thanks, Derek] and also into a book called something like "Kiwi Surfing's Golden Years". So I'll be happily occupied. You? Now might just be the perfect time to finally get around to that project.



### 4. THE ROAD TO PIHA

These photos might interest – or amuse - you. This is the road between Auckland and Piha. Two taken in 1966 during a surf safari I made with friend Paul Keown through the North and Sound Islands [I lived in Brighton, south of Dunedin at the time] The other two photos were taken last year. Sitting in my Hi-Ace van at the Piha campground as the rain fell steadily, I thought "So what can I do today?" Time for some photos of what causes the rainforest in the Waitakeres Ranges to be called "rainforest". So - another coffee – and a drive back along the Piha Road towards Auckland, looking for both curving road that "looked right" and where the trees alongside the road also looked good. My camera stayed under the parka apart from brief moments of "photo time".

Our big native trees are long-lived and CPL [Piha's Craig Levers] reckons he knows where these were taken.

A bit more of the story for you. Paul and I drove through the drizzle and arrived at Piha. The beach was empty. The sky was grey. It was drizzling still. Big waves rolled shorewards, reared up, and dumped in widow-making fashion. Paul and I were both boardriders and surf lifesavers down Dunedin way and had a pretty good idea what would happen to us if we tried to paddle out.

I looked at Paul standing next to me in the rain. He looked at me. "Must be about time to make dinner then?" "Reckon so".





Paul and I on our 1966 surfin' safari through the South and North Islands. I surfed overhead waves at Raglan by myself on that trip. Not another soul in sight. I'll tell you about that another time, maybe.

Photo by Janet Carrott



## 5. OTHER STUFF

We will, of course, get back to other stuff [workshops, tuition, mentoring, photographing your family] some time, but let's worry about that later. In the meantime, **be safe and be kind.**