



10 QUICK TIPS FOR BETTER WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY

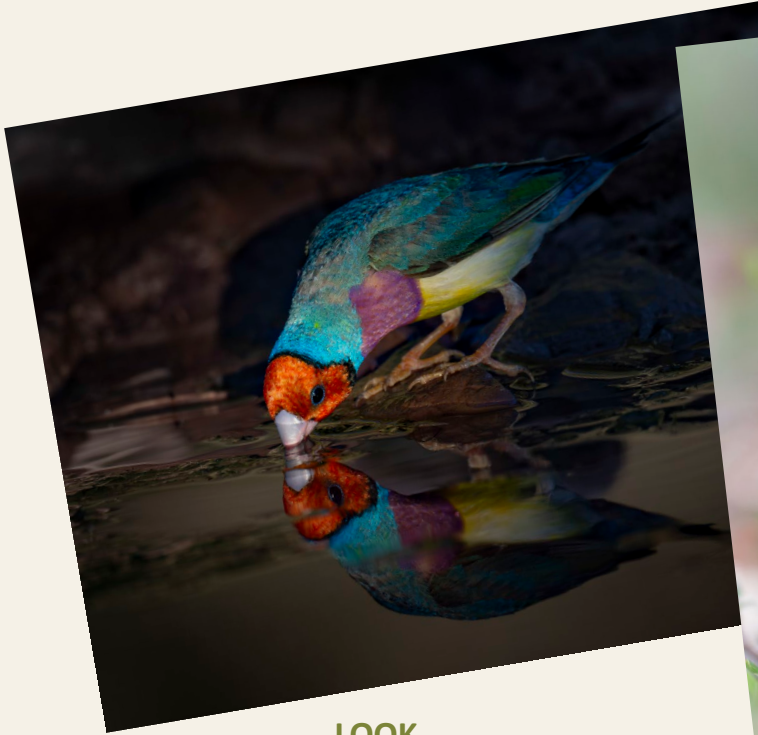
Practical fieldcraft. Stronger frames. More
photographs you love.

PAUL THOMSEN · DARWIN CAMERA CLUB · 5 AUGUST 2026



Technique matters. Knowing your subject matters more.

Wildlife photography is mostly observation, and with observation comes anticipation and knowledge, as well as seeing.



LOOK



WAIT



REACT

The eyes have it

A sharp eye gives the viewer somewhere to connect.

Nearest eye first

If depth of field is shallow, prioritise the eye closest to you.

Use the tools

Continuous autofocus and animal-eye detection can help—but check that the camera has chosen the right eye.









Come at me, bro

A face, glance or profile usually creates more connection than a disappearing backside.





A rear view can still work when the gesture, light, habitat or story is doing something special.

Get onto their level

Eye level lets the viewer enter the animal's world—not simply look down on it.



WHY IT WORKS

More intimacy
Better separation
A natural viewpoint

But it isn't always possible—and no photograph is worth stressing wildlife, damaging habitat or compromising safety.

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Watch your back...ground

A quiet background gives the subject room to breathe.

SCAN

Check bright edges, branches and awkward mergers.

SEPARATE

More distance behind the animal usually means more blur.

MOVE

A step sideways—or getting lower—can transform the frame.

Bright empty sky often pulls attention away from the wildlife. It can work—but make it an intentional graphic choice.



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THE BACKGROUND CAN BECOME THE PICTURE

The bird anchors the frame.
The sun supplies the mood, colour and
drama.

Don't just remove distractions. Look for a
background worth photographing.

TIP 5

Spray and pray— then edit without mercy

Rapid burst is insurance for action, expression and split-second behaviour.

Use it for moments, not minutes.

The cost is paid later—when you have to find the one frame where everything came together.



TIMING

WILDFOTO









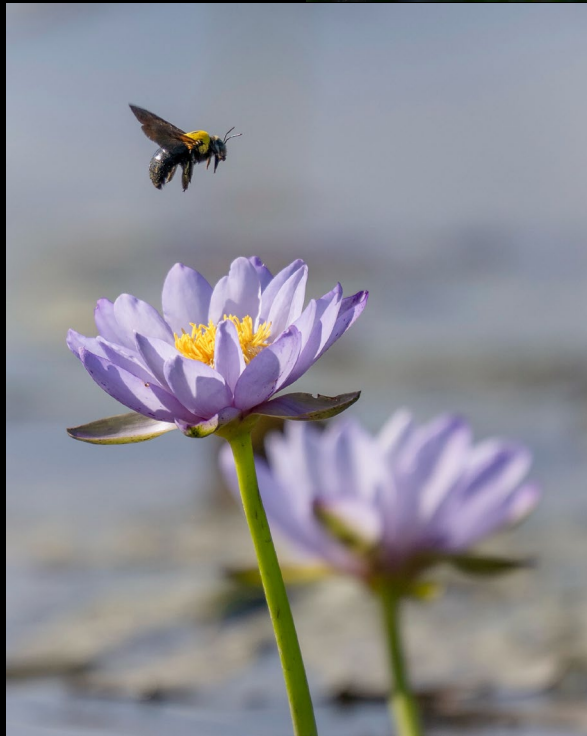












Photograph the behaviour, not just the animal

A portrait records appearance. Behaviour reveals character, relationship and story.

Look for

interaction • tension • feeding • courtship •
parenting • movement

Rare doesn't automatically mean remarkable

Extraordinary content can still become an ordinary photograph.



IQ: give the file a fighting chance

Image quality isn't everything—but weak technique can bury a great moment.

- | | | |
|----|------------------|--|
| 01 | FOCUS | Put sharpness where the story needs it |
| 02 | SHUTTER | Freeze—or deliberately show—movement |
| 03 | EXPOSURE | Protect the important highlights and detail |
| 04 | ISO | Use what the moment requires within limits; manage the noise later |
| 05 | STABILITY | Technique, support and timing still matter |

Aim for clean enough, sharp enough and well exposed enough to support the photograph—not a laboratory score.

TIP 8

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ISO 25600

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Not so close, Paul!

**Sometimes the
environment is the story.**

Filling the frame delivers detail and intimacy. Pulling back can deliver scale, weather, place and atmosphere.

Let the animal be small when the world around it has something to say.



Learn the recipes. Then cook your own meal.

The 'rules' are patterns that often work—not laws that every photograph must obey.

PRACTISE

Make enough frames to discover what you respond to.

NOTICE

Study your successes, misses and recurring habits.

REFINE

Seek critique; keep what helps and test the rest.

ENJOY

Build a style that makes you want to go out again.

You do you—just do it deliberately.



THE TEN-SECOND CHECKLIST

01 Eyes

02 Angle

03 Level

04 Background

05 Moment

06 Story

07 Design

08 Technique

09 Space

10 Style

MAKE
PHOTOGRAPHS
NOT JUST
RECORDS.

Questions?

wildfoto.com.au