Beckham Digital

Nov 2016
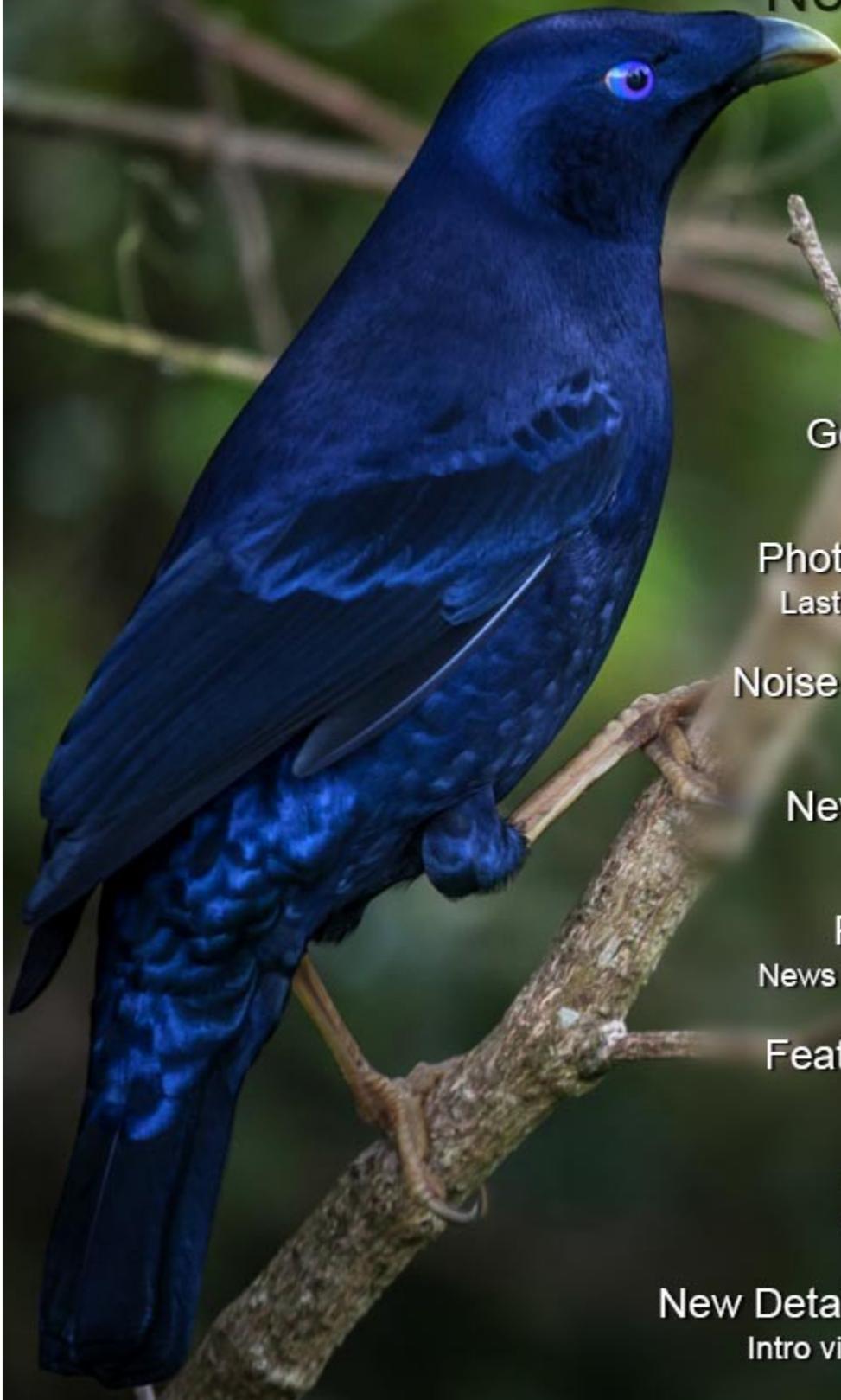
Cover Photo – Blue Satin Bower Bird

This image was shot with an ISO of 1600, yet it displays little or no noise. The trick to this? Well it's not really a trick at all. Just common sense and good photographic techniques starting at the button press.

Many photographers avoid increasing the ISO because they have an irrational fear of the noise they may create. If that means they then lose the image due to camera shake, then it'
s rather a failure all round, but it doesn't have to be. See below for our section on noise and high ISO.

Google Chrome - Browser

What is the difference between the many browsers that we all seem to use? Probably not much when you consider what we want from them. There are too many browsers out there for any one person to be an expert on them all.

What I like about Chrome is it works fine and gives me no issues with what I do, but it also allows me to save lots of favourites. I am sure all browsers do that, but I also like the way that if I sign up for a Google account and sign on with different PC's, then my favourites are all duplicated on those PC's automatically. Again, I doubt this is unique, but I mention it here because I find this particularly useful.
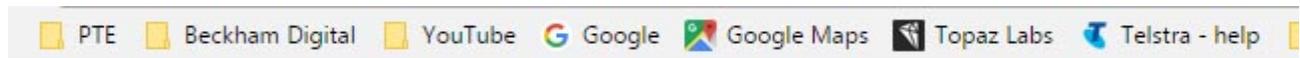
I use two PC's and a laptop while travelling and it's comforting to know that every web page or option I need is the same on all the PC's I sign into. It makes sharing pages easier and in the event that you format your hard drive for a re-installation of windows or in fact buy a new PC. All your favourites are in place, in the same position, without any effort at all. All you do is install Chrome and sign in.

In fact I have created a software folder with links to all the software I would need if any of my PC's had to have Windows re-installed. Things like the Wacom Graphics tablet Drivers page, Photoshop Creative Cloud icon, VLC media player etc.

Just download and install Google Chrome (free) on your new PC, sign in and all your favourites are there

Photographic Competition – Closing 30th November

An open Competition which will be run on The BeckhamForum. A simple sign up with email, username and password is all that is required to join the forum.

Competition Rules

1. Enter ONE image no larger than 1920 pixels by 1080 pixels and that is simply to allow me to put together a slide show of all images, quickly and easily with the results.

2. The subject is open. Colour, Monochrome, anything you think is right

3. Entries will be via a file drop link on the forum

4. Closing Date for enties 30th November 2016

5. Images may contain a title, but in all other respects must remain anonymous, no authors name. You will know who you are when you see and hear the results.

6. Judging will be arranged via a judge who will also remain anonymous to those entering.

7. Marks will be out of 10

Competition Guidelines or Etiquette

It doesn't make a great deal of sense to sort through your images and use a tried and tested successful image from a previous competition. If you do that, then you will be more interested in winning, rather than getting good honest feedback on your image. So, we are honour bound here to submit newer images or those not seen before if possible. That benefits both you and others entering.

The judge and the members being completely anonymous to each other should ensure the most honest feedback you're ever likely to get on your images. I will find a judge in the same way we would do this in Camera Club circles.

High ISO and Digital Noise

A friend asked recently why is it that beginner cameras offer iso from 100 to 3200 yet enthusiast and pro cameras offer 50 to 25600. The questioner wanted to know if you would ever use 25600 and what would the image be like. Could it be used or not? If not, why do they offer these iso settings? In the questioners experience the noise in a photo taken at night with a 2000 ISO was virtually unusable

Canon 400mm Lens – 1600ISO -100th of a second @ F5.6

This is an interesting subject, but if you Google it, you may quickly lose the will to live. Many of the articles you find, dwell far too much on the technical reasons why we get noise. We are more interested in a solution to the problem. Noise in our images increases as we increase the ISO, but then again we know that too don't we? The larger the digital sensor, (SLRs) the less noise it creates when compared to a camera with a smaller sensor.

So, the question was, suppose we shot an image at 3200 iso or higher and it was very noisy. Would it be usable? Well, that rather depends. if we were looking for an image of the quality we expect in camera club competitions or we want to make a decent print. Then I doubt you would want to use it. I am setting aside a high ISO setting used as a deliberate creative choice.

If you were at an air show and captured a batch of noisy shots of the aircraft due to a very high ISO setting, then your peers are not likely to be very impressed.

1600 ISO – 400mm Canon Lens - 400th of a second @ F7.1

However, if at the same air show you captured a noisy shot at a very high ISO of an aircraft crash landing. The noise would hardly be an issue at all. You would sell that image easily all around the world and everyone would be impressed with it. In this case the content of the image is the significant issue, not the quality.

So, if higher iso settings create more noise, it seems pretty obvious what our photographic approach should be. Keep the iso setting as low as you possible and never increase it unless you physically cannot hand hold the camera and get a sharp picture.

How do we know where that point is between what we can hand hold and what we can't? Well, we don't know for sure because some people have a steadier hand than others, but there are some simple guidelines you can adopt that really work.

1. Keep your iso set at its lowest setting as standard. Don't use 400 iso as a catch-all setting so you don't have to worry about camera shake at all. Adopt this strategy only if you're willing to always be battling excess noise in your photographs.

2. Always try to ensure that the shutter speed you use is equivalent to the focal length of your lens. i.e. If your using a 200mm lens then try to achieve a 200th of a second shutter speed. This is not an exact science, but it's a good practical guide for hand held shots and it's easy to remember. Using a 400mm lens then look to get a 400th of a second shutter if you're hand holding, or take precautions

3. Those precautions are: Use a tripod – A Bean bag - Find some street furniture that you can brace yourself and/or your camera against or just take what extra care you can while shooting

4. If you have no choice other than to increase the iso, then increase it the minimum amount you need. 100 to 200 rather than from 100 to 400.

5. If you have raised the iso, then the one thing you must **NOT DO** is allow any under-exposure to occur at all. Anyone who has done any image editing knows that raising detail from shadows creates noise. If you under-expose, your adding more potential noise on top of the noise from the higher iso. This is why the questioner was concerned about high ISO for night photography.

6. If possible expose to the right. Meaning squeeze as much light into your sensor as you possibly can. Add exposure compensation when shooting in any automatic exposure modes. (Auto – Aperture Priority - Shutter Priority) Look at the LCD and if no burnout of the highlights can be seen, increase the exposure. The trick is to virtually over-expose the shot, (for want of a better way to describe this) without going so far that you then cause more problems with blown out highlights. Now, during the image editing, your moving those sliders in a direction that helps the noise, not the other way, that makes noise worse.

Look at the two image examples below: These are two differently exposed images of the same subject. It was a three image auto bracketed exposure (AEB) and you can see two of the shots . It's a 200% enlargement of the claw of the bird in our cover photo. Both images were shot at 1600 ISO. The image on the left is untouched in camera raw and was exposed for what the camera felt was the correct exposure. 250Th @ f5.6.

The one on the right was exposed at 100th @ f5.6. That is one stop more exposure or double the light. I have darkened the one on the right a little so the two match better in density, but even at this tiny size you can see a massive difference in the effect of noise and this is done with just exposure alone.
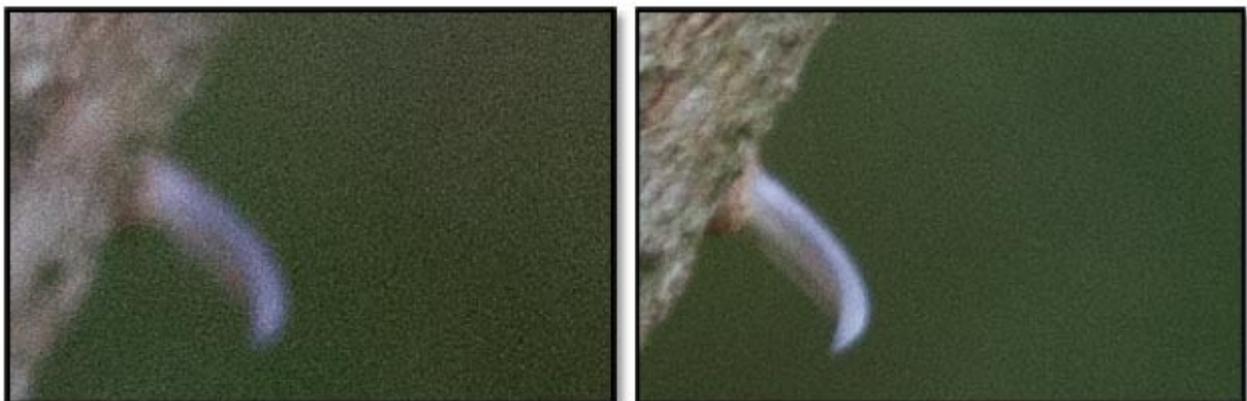
7. Photoshop and Lightroom have some superb tools to combat noise still further from our example above. In Camera Raw and Lightroom look in the Luminance tab. These tools seem to have the ability to smooth out noise, but without making the image edges overall soft. Be careful you don't go too far with these tools and make your image look a little cartoon like.

Final thoughts......There is always a possibility of dealing with excess noise in your image via Photoshop or Lightroom. There is almost no possibility of doing anything with a blurred image.

[Part 4 of our Photoshop for Photographers covers this subject](#)

[Remember Part 1 is free](#)

Creating Artwork – Free Video

When it comes to presenting images via an on screen slide show we know that we can do that fairly easily with PicturesToExe, but if we add some artwork from our image editor like Photoshop or Elements we can make something a bit different.

Here we use Photoshop and create a 35mm film strip. Using copy and paste it only takes a few minutes, it's really quick and easy to do. We created ours for a slide show, so we need extra size for animation, but you could easily do what we demonstrate in our video using a 3:2 aspect ratio and make a film strip frame for your images.

[Download our video from HERE (dropbox)](#)

[Download our video from HERE (mediafire)](#)

PicturesToExe 9 – Long Awaited Update

PicturesToExe 9 is now in the final stages of beta testing and I can tell you it's the most comprehensive update we have ever seen with our favourite slide show software. Not only do we have new tools and a vastly improved Objects and Animation screen, but the software is a big step closer to a fully working Mac version.

The highlight are:-

• Multi-select of keyframes.
• Multiple editing of parameters for selected keyframes.
• Modifiers for parameters of animation.
• Animation parameter in a keyframe can be disabled.
• Timeline can display keyframes of multiple objects.
• Use of any objects, image, video as masking layers.
• Animation in frame for images.
• Custom Transitions greatly improved with import and export opportunities
• Colour Management for jpg images
• Animation in frame for images.
• Many Colour Correction/Creative colour tools
• and more.............

Watch out for our comprehensive what's new set of videos that we will make available as soon as possible. In the meantime you can view a couple of demo's made with a beta copy of PTE-9 in the past few days.

Triptychs one image

Triptychs for 3:2 portrait format images

3D Digital Book

Photoshop Creative Cloud – Layers

It's been a while since Layers was a subject in our newsletter and while looking for an old presentation the other day I found a video I made called the Concept of Layers. It formed the basis of a series of videos going right through Layers from the Concept to the creative use of layers in our day to day editing.

You can find Layers as a subject right through our Photoshop for Photographers range of videos and what I have always said about Layers is this. If you're not making full use of Layers it's like driving a car without tyres. Yes, you will make some progress, but pretty soon you will grind to a stop. Layers forms the backbone of our creative and corrective work.

We deal with Layers in our Photoshop for Photographers range and also as a dedicated category Called Understanding Layers HERE. These videos take just a few minutes to download
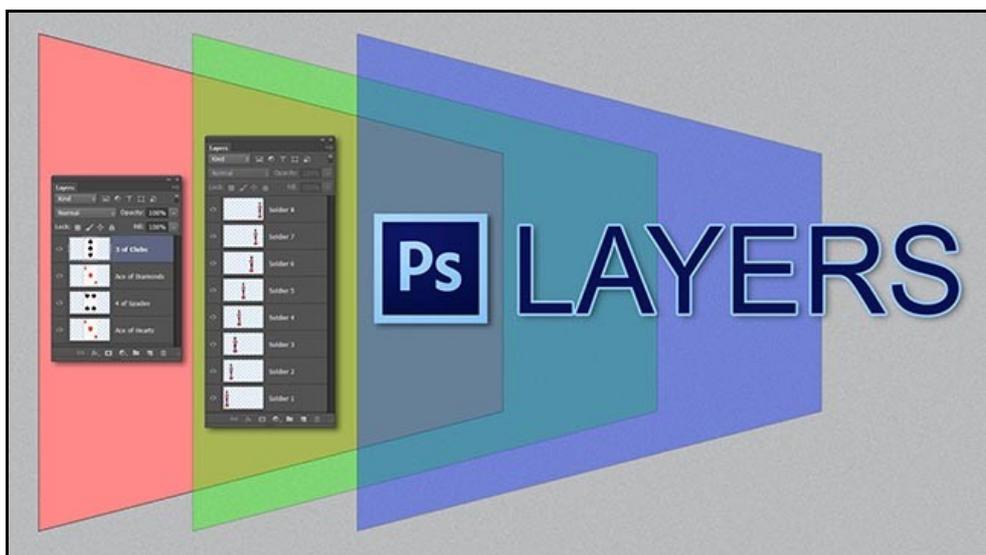
View the Video on YouTube HERE

The Tutorials are HERE

YouTube video introductions to other titles in our range

Photoshop for Photographers	A Complete Photoshop Course
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Photoshop for Photographers Part 3 Intro	Purchase
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Picture in Picture_Introduction	Purchase
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Adding Video_Introduction	Purchase
What's New in P2E-8_Pdf Contents	Purchase
Camera Craft	**Get the best from your DSLR**
Camera Craft Pdf	View & Purchase

Remember, we can be contacted via email with any queries you have, or you can phone us for a chat. We will guide you fairly and honestly and never sell you anything we do not think you need. Check out our number on our CONTACTS page.