



PHOTOGRAPHY



YouTube
Photography Coaching & Birding Tours



2018



2020



2022



2024

Anyone can do it!

It just takes time and dedication.

It is a mindset - not buying the right gear.

THERE'S NO RIGHT OR WRONG WAY - DO WHAT WORKS FOR YOU

My Three Pillars

PATIENCE ~ PRACTICE ~ POSITIONING

Embrace the meditative wait!

See a good shot as a gift, not an expectation.

Get out as often as you can and shoot 'practice birds', even if they're common.

Right time, right place, right angle.



Some ingredients for a great bird photo

These are recommendations that are MORE LIKELY to give you a great shot. They are not hard and fast rules! I aim to check off about 5 of these...

- 1: At least part of the bird in sharp focus - 95% of the time this should be the eye.
- 2: One eye showing - both eyes can look a bit kooky (which can be cute!).
- 3: Bird facing the camera or a good body position - not awkward.
- 4: The 'eye catch' - that bit of reflected light in the eye.
- 5: A uniform background - not necessarily 'clean'. One type of element, leaf etc.
- 6: Separation of the bird and background (space behind the bird).
- 7: Nice light conditions, usually within 1.5 hours of sunrise or sunset.
- 8: Behaviour or action tells more of a story.
- 9: Avoid blue sky if you can, 'ground' your flight shots with some background.



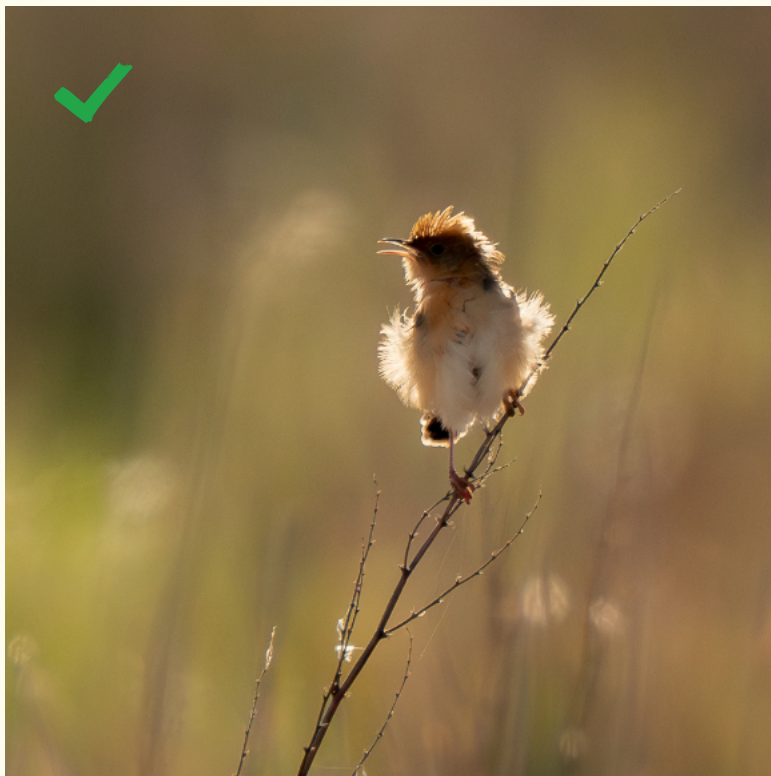
Exceptions Example

- 1: Sharp focus ✓
- 2: One eye showing ✓
- 3: Bird facing the camera ✗
- 4: Clean background ✗ Uniform BG ✗
- 5: The 'eye catch' ✗
- 6: Nice light conditions ✗
- 7: Behaviour or action ✓
- 8: No Blue Sky ✗



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The best camera is the one you have in your hand!

Don't let lack of expensive equipment /big lenses stop you from starting your bird photography journey!

Not much focal length? Focus on your backgrounds and master the habitat shot..

Try a teleconverter if there is one available for your camera.

Tripod is optional. I generally don't use one. Do what works for you.



Better to get an exceptional shot of an ordinary bird

Than an ordinary shot of an exceptional bird

Which is the more engaging shot?
Shoot common birds for practice.



There is no Magic Camera Setting!

No one formula for success.
I have ranges I work with 90% of the time.

Shooting manual mode in RAW format is optimal.

Invest in a good quality memory card with a fast write speed.

On auto still? Start with shutter speed priority, auto ISO and auto white balance.



General Composition Rules

- Rules of thirds
- Using leading lines
- Use of negative/blank space
- Photograph the light not just the subject
- Look for symmetry and patterns
- Frame using natural elements



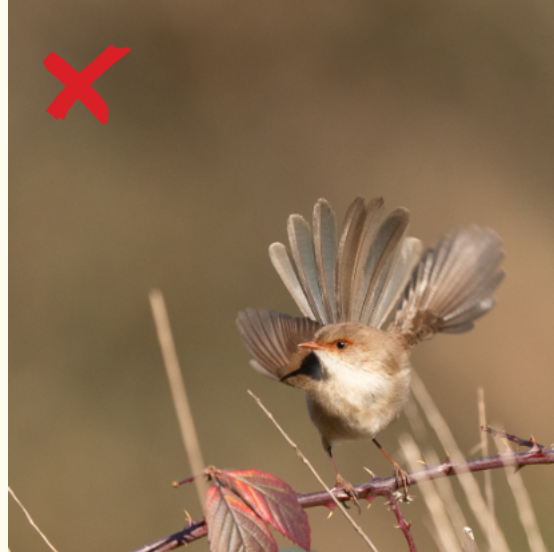
Bird Specific Tips

Shoot at eye level
with your subject

Watch for foreground
distractions

Move slightly or lean to one side
for cleaner BG

Avoid Blue Sky



Don't frame too tightly
Leave room for edits

Use negative space to
enhance the bird

Allow room for
movement and direction
in the frame

Avoid unnatural perches*
*(I don't always ... I quite like
them)*

Keep the sun behind you
1 hour past dawn
(thereabouts)





Use the rule of thirds
Don't place the bird
right in the middle



Avoid birds flying away
or looking away

Try natural framing
if you can't get a clean
shot





Finding Birds

- 1: Avoid tall trees and heavily wooded areas
- 2: Wear neutral clothing
- 3: Look for natural perches
- 4: Stake out water & food sources
- 5: Go out often/back to same spots
- 6: Avoid call apps - memorise calls for brain health!



Post Processing - Personal Taste!

Always get the best shot in the field that you can

Don't over-edit

Establish a consistent work flow

Not sure? Wait overnight, come back with fresh eyes

Don't crop too tight





Check whites for colour cast - correct white balance
Watch for overblown highlights, loss of detail and artefacts
Don't edit at night in darkened rooms
Remember 'Rule of Thirds' when cropping!

What Works for Me

Lightroom Cloud version with 1TB of storage \$175AU per year

Affinity Photo for more advanced editing (layers) \$120AU one-of cost (not cloud based)

Find software you find intuitive - use free trials to test



See you out there!

For more articles visit my photo journal

www.flyingparrot.au



ONLINE COACHING COMING SOON

*Contact me via my website if you are in the Sapphire Coast
or East Gippsland regions and would like a personalised coaching session*