

Andy Astbury:

“The 120mm macro lens is capable of resolving incredibly fine detail,” according to Andy, “but what is more important is that the PhaseOne sensors are capable of recording all that fine detail.”



© Andy Astbury

Shooting Wildlife Using a Phase One Digital 120mm f.4 Macro Lens

By Michael Roscoe

Performance

Wildlife pictures are ‘all about the image quality’ according to leading UK photographer Andy Astbury. “Stock agencies demand high quality [digital] files, so if two photographers have shot a similar image, guess which one is going to get the sale?”

Andy was recently introduced to the Phase One 645 using a P 30+ and 120mm lens. First impressions of the Phase One system were favorable as he feels, “It is well constructed and very well balanced and it’s not noticeably heavier than a pro Nikon or Canon body. The controls are very intuitive and it is extremely robust and able to stand up to any rough handling that you can throw at it – it is not fragile in any way.”

He explains that his Close-up and Macro images of this kind are commonly captured with an aperture setting between f.11 and f.16 and says there’s no negative real quality problem using an ISO rating up to 800. Shutter speeds settings can, of course, vary but he claims to have tested the gear with exposures up to 5 minutes with no image degradation.

Andy’s dedication to producing the highest quality image files means that he meticulously inspects his final images with some surprising results, “I shot an image of a Damsel fly (not

to be confused with a Dragon fly that is much bigger) and, for the first time, I could see the detail of the compound eye structure, an area that is 2 square millimeters. I knew it was there but I’ve never actually seen it using a DSLR”.

He goes on to describe the 120mm lens as, “Staggeringly sharp,” and says that it produces no distortion and no chromatic aberrations. But while he insists that, in certain circumstances, wildlife photographers will have to make the switch to medium format cameras in the future to stay competitive; he adds a footnote stating that longer focal length lenses are needed in the Phase One system to really satisfy the needs of the professional wildlife photographer.

Incredible details

“The 120mm macro lens is capable of resolving incredibly fine detail, but what is more important is that the Phase One sensors are capable of recording all that fine detail. I have the ultimate confidence in the reliability of the system whether I was working in the desert or shooting Emperor penguins in the Antarctic.”

Andy Astbury

Equipment

- Phase One 645 camera
- P 30+ digital back
- Phase One Digital 120mm Macro lens
- Nikon & Canon DSLR
- Gitzo 1548 tripod
- Manfrotto 490 ball head
- Cable release
- PC
- Capture One 4 PRO software
- PhotoShop CS3
- Lightroom, Bibble PRO

About the photographer

Name : Andy Astbury

Web : www.wildlifeinpixels.com

Email : andy@wildlifeinpixels.com

Dealer : The Flash Centre, Birmingham

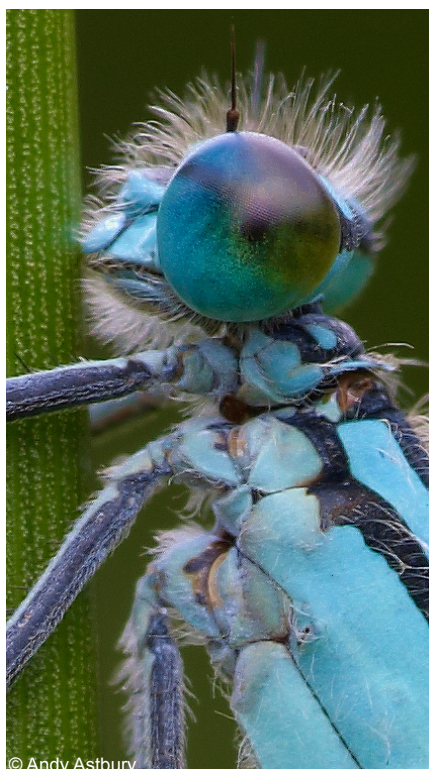
Andy says he stumbled into photography by accident while studying a Fine Art foundation course at college. His expertise does not stop at still imagery as he has also worked for corporate and broadcast clients internationally, in fields from ENG news to studio-based programming.

This Cheshire based UK photographer has a passion for wildlife and natural history where he now dedicates much of his time shooting stock photography as well as teaching wildlife workshops.

Phase One Digital MF 120mm f. 4 Macro Lens



| |
|----------------------------|
| Aperture: f. 4-32 |
| 9 elements in 8 groups |
| Angle of view: 33° |
| Min. focus: 40 cm / 1.3 ft |
| Weight: 835gr./ 29.2 oz. |



© Andy Astbury