

Open

Image Title	Judge Comments	Result
Spangled	This is a strong capture, with excellent timing to catch the bird at take-off and the eye rendered beautifully sharp. The bright light has made the dynamic range challenging, and the dark feathers on the body of the bird have lost some detail as a result. You could explore gently lifting the shadows in post-processing to recover more texture in the body. The grevillea backdrop is a real highlight and adds colour and interest without overpowering the subject.	Highly Commended
Meet Squarky	The fine detail in the white feathers has been handled very well, and the eye sits nicely in focus, and together with the quizzical expression gives the image life. The plain green background works effectively to isolate the bird, although a few small white specks do draw the viewer's attention. These would be quick and easy to tidy up in post-processing. The top of his head does appear a little cutout perhaps due to a selection and processing difference with the background. Overall, a well taken image and perhaps experiment with a more dynamic pose or flight shot for a higher result.	Highly Commended
Lone Pine	This is a compelling minimalist image, with the lone pine forming a strong and confident subject. The soft clouds and misty water create a lovely, ethereal mood. Some of the water detail however appears to have been softened a little too much and lost detail, particularly where the land meets the sea, which causes a slight imbalance in texture. Overall, the composition is thoughtful and effective, and the concept is very well seen.	Highly Commended
Industry Sunset	You've composed this image well, using the river as a leading line to guide the viewer toward the power station and sunset beyond. Including the moving train adds an extra layer of story and interest to the	Highly Commended

	<p>scene. It does sit quite close to the edge of the frame, which makes it feel slightly cramped. A subtle lift in the shadow areas of the land, especially near the power station, and darken the highlights in the sky, could also help bring more depth and life to the image.</p>	
Smoking it Up	<p>Zooming in tightly on the smoke was a smart decision and really enhances the sense of action and excitement. The barriers near the edges of the frame do compete for attention and could have been reduced or removed to keep the focus on the main subject. Including even a small glimpse of the driver and/or part of the vehicle without the smoke might have strengthened the emotional connection with the viewer. Overall, this is a bold and energetic capture with strong potential.</p>	Highly Commended
Tree Fungus	<p>This is a lovely find, presented simply and effectively, with the central composition working well for the subject. Gently lifting the shadows underneath would help reveal more of the delicate textures in the gills. Toning down the brighter reflective highlights could also improve balance. A small crop from the left would remove some edge distractions or also consider a subtle vignette to allow the beautifully textured bark to shine as a background. The textured and emerging curved stem is a real standout of the image.</p>	Merit
Soft Light	<p>The soft light suits this subject beautifully, allowing the delicate colours and shapes of the grevillea to really stand out. Your use of shallow depth of field has been handled with care and adds elegance to the image. The brighter highlights near the top do pull the eye out of the frame and could be darkened or cropped. The loss of some of the leaves in the centre of the branch looks unnatural perhaps caused by a poor selection in post. Despite this, the subtle tones and textures are very well displayed and make for a pleasing image.</p>	Merit

<p>Ruining the dunes for photographers</p>	<p>The playful title immediately sets the scene and conveys your frustration in a light-hearted way. The low light across the dunes creates striking shadows and adds wonderful depth. Including the quad bikes introduces a strong narrative element, while the tyre tracks on the right, form an effective leading line. This is a well-observed scene that balances humour with strong visual impact.</p>	<p>Honour</p>
<p>The fishing shack</p>	<p>This is a beautiful landscape, with dramatic, textured clouds complementing the lush green foliage perfectly. The placement of the shack on the rule of thirds is spot on and adds a clear and engaging narrative. The image conveys a strong sense of isolation and calm. Overall, this is a confident and well-crafted photograph that draws the viewer in.</p>	<p>Honour</p>