

On The Wild Side



The Wildlife Art Society International

On the Wild Side



Welcome to our third online Edition! And a warm welcome to our new members featured in this issue. You will also find a few visit reports from last year as well as our annual get together at Slimbridge.

With the passing of my good friend Jane Shackleton, we are in dire need of a new treasurer, with John filling the position temporarily. Jane was that kind of friend who had such a big heart, she would always put others before herself to the detriment of her own health. Not an artist, when she learned we had been looking for a new treasurer for over 6 months without success, she spontaneously offered to fill that role, even if this meant covering a long distance to get to the meetings in person.

Using Zoom to conduct such meetings in the future could widen our search for new (younger) committee members. So, if you think you can help in any capacity, please put your name forward so this wonderful society can continue to live on for many more years and offer we artists, opportunities to exhibit our artworks while helping meaningful charities.

I would like to thank John Horton who helped me proof read this issue. If you think you can help for next issue, please contact me, your help will be greatly appreciated. In the meantime, enjoy this online issue, as there are such wonderful artworks as well as very interesting and original articles in there.

France Bauduin.

Contents

Welcome to the Spring Edition 2026 – John Horton
TWASI Christmas Card Competition 2025 Results
AGM & Members Weekend at Nature in Art 2025
2026 AGM & Members Weekend (Guest Artists)
Costwold Falconry Visit – Louise Hancox
Costwold Wildlife Park Visit – Sarais Crawshaw
Twycross Zoo visit – Joy Roberts
Slimbridge Visit – Sarais Crawshaw
TWASI New Patron – Nick Mackman
CV New Member – Gill Barratt
CV New Member – Gill Barrett
CV New Member – Richard Crabtree
CV New Member – Jo Harmison
CV New Member – Caroline Hughes
CV New International Member – Géraldine Ragon
CV New Member – Mike Howard
TWASI Summer Competition Theme – Sun and Shade
Creating Wildlife is Wild! – Christine Dadd
Sea Otter Artwork Smashes Record – Louise Hancox
Art with a Purpose – Sophie Parkhill
Obituary Barry Wilding – Valerie Briggs
Obituary Jane Goodall – John Horton
Visits Lists 2026
AGM 2026 form

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Cover story
Artwork: *A Long Road Home*
Earning £2000 to the Tsavo Trust charity
by Sophie Parkhill

Back Cover
Photos taken from the AGM weekend

Errata in Autumn 25:
Cate Cutas (new member)
Should have read Cate Kutas



The Wildlife Art Society International
Art with Conservation

Patrons: Nick Macman
Pauline Kidner Founder and Advisor for Secret World Wildlife Rescue
Anna-Louise Pickering
Mandy Shepherd
Hazel Soan
Simon Trapnell FRSA, Director of Nature in Art Museum and Art Gallery, Glos

President: Sarais Crawshaw

Vice President: Vic Sharratt

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Christine Dadd	Exhibition Coordinator
Bridget Cordory	Exhibition Forms Coordinator
Jackie Fearn	
Dave Skidmore	
Tracey-Anne Sitch	
Tracy Ruth Hancock	
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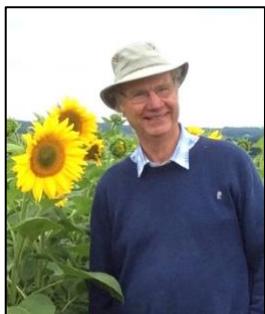
Aims of TWASI

The main aim of the society is to promote interest in the wildlife art genre and in wildlife conservation by:

Creating a greater public awareness of the genre and work of its members.
Assisting its members to further their skills and interests in the wildlife arts field.
Keeping its members informed on relevant aspects and activities in the wildlife arts field.

Arranging and promoting exhibitions and displays for and on behalf of its members.
Organising lectures, workshops, courses and other events to further the interests of its members.

Welcome to the Spring edition of “On the Wild Side” for 2026



Welcome to our online edition of “On the Wildside” with lots of good stuff to read!

I start on a sad note. You will know from my emails that Jane, our treasurer, sadly passed away in November. We miss her on many levels. She did a great job and attended all the meetings and suffered stoically our wildlife artist banter uncomplainingly! I thoroughly enjoyed working with her as she tackled the thorny problems of communicating with the bank!!

Jane was a very kind soul and my only regret is that I'd not known her longer. We were privileged to attend her funeral and hear the tributes from her friends and family. Her niece sang ‘Somewhere over the rainbow’ beautifully and we learnt that Jane was a member of several choirs. A very large congregation with standing room only was indicative of the love and regard with which she was held.

We now search for someone to take on the role of treasurer. We are looking at using Zoom and the internet more for communication and in the short term, with help from Jeff Shaw, I'll keep things ticking over.

The poster for the exhibition with leaflets will be circulated very shortly and the registrations are coming in. Let me know if you have not received the forms. I will contact everyone that I have not received confirmation from.

Attend as many of the visits as you can. Great way to meet up and take photos and do some sketches and get inspired!

Keep up on www.twasi.com, FaceBook and Instagram and I look forward to meeting up at the exhibition.

John Horton

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TWASI CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION 2025

1ST PRIZE WINNER – LESLEY CONNOLLY with “PTARMIGANS”

I'm an old romantic when it comes to Christmas, I want a White Christmas! Sadly the last time we had one in the West Midlands was in 2017. So I thought, where does it always snow? Scotland, The Cairngorms. What lives there? Red Squirrels, Golden Eagles, Pine Martens, Ptarmigans, Mountain Hares even Scottish Wildcats! What a choice!

After looking through my reference photographs, I decided to paint a pair of Ptarmigans. The male being all white would have been difficult against a snowy background, so I included a partly coloured female in the foreground providing a hint of warm colour to this wintery scene. It is painted in acrylic on a 30 x 30cm canvas.

Thank you for choosing it as TWASI 1st Prize Christmas card.

Lesley Connolly.



TWASI CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION 2025

2nd PLACE – SOPHIE PARKHILL with “*LET IT SNOW*”

Let It Snow is a winter Christmas card version of my original pastel painting **Winter Walks**, featuring two Snow Bunting birds. It's part of my winter series and is based on a reference image with thanks to Andy Wilson.

This small 10 x 10 inch pastel was such a nice piece to work on. I called it *Winter Walks* because Snow Buntings have quite a distinctive walk/run across the ground, and it reminded me of walking with my other half, in the snow (on the rare occasions that we actually get some snow sticking on the Welsh coastline). It's a joyful piece bringing a smile to those who find the winter months a bit dull and drizzly.

Snow Buntings are migratory visitors to the Welsh coast during winter, and they're often spotted on the Great Orme, where I used to work. I love all birds, but I find it particularly fascinating that these tiny birds travel so far to feed on the Great Orme each year. I still haven't managed to photograph one myself sadly, but I'm hoping for that "right time, right place" moment one day!

I used a gentle blending technique with PanPastel to keep the background nice and soft, and simple, adding just a light touch of snow in the foreground, keeping the birds as the main focus.

Sophie Parkhill.



TWASI CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION 2025

3RD PLACE – LUCY FRASER with “WINTER SLUMBER”

My painting **Winter Slumber** features a British barn owl (*Tyto alba*) perched on a fence post with winter moth’s (*Operophtera brumata*) flitting around her. These moths are one of the few insects able to fly in our colder months - their blood contains a type of anti-freeze which together with slim, light bodies and broad wings, makes flight possible, even when it snows.

Moths, butterflies and birds are my favourite creatures to paint. I love their delicate detail and surprising patterns and colours. This barn owl’s feathers are some of the more challenging and rewarding things I have painted. I’ve seen this particular female owl on a number of occasions flying and perching at nearby Somerset meadows. I saw Winter moths in both my porch and local woods this winter. I like to observe species in the wild before painting them.

I noticed how the moths’ colouring and markings resembled parts of a barn owl’s feathers and thought these two beautiful species would look good together. For this piece, I used watercolours and acrylics on cold-pressed paper which I then cut out and mounted onto board painted with snowflakes.

Lucy Fraser.



“Congratulations to the winners, and well done to all the entrants.”

TWASI AGM and Members Weekend October 4th and 5th 2025

This annual event has been held every year at Nature in Art virtually since the society started and has really never run out of ideas and inspiration from the days when 60 plus members attended the weekend to the more structured event that takes place now. I can remember the early events, they usually involved rather a lot of alcohol in the evenings, lots of laughter and a very interesting informative time spent with wonderful professional artists like Alan Hunt, Simon Combes, John Banovich from America and David Shepherd (one of our original patrons), with illustrated talks by Bruce Pearson and Keith Shackleton amongst many others.

We have had our own superb workshops and guest artists too in recent years to name but a few Hazel Soan, Nick Mackman, Eric Wilson and Mandy Shepherd.

The TWASI council are pleased that this event is still able to be held and completely self-funded. Nature in Art very kindly give us the exhibition block free for the weekend and we have first class service from NIA café with the Director Simon Trapnell and his wife Carol looking after us on the Saturday evening themselves when we have our fish 'n' chip supper.

We are so lucky to have such a good working relationship with Nature in Art. This year for the first time in many years the weekend made a small profit and this has been donated to Nature in Art towards their new outdoor education room which will be built in the centre of the garden where the sculpture of the eagle now resides. We may be able to make use of this building ourselves too during member's weekends in future.

Two members who attended the workshops have written a piece describing what they thought of their day creating artwork they do not normally use, thank you to Sarais and Bridget for writing down their memories of their day.

Colour Reduction Lino Print Workshop with Mandi Baykaa Murray



Mandi explained Lino Cutting is a relief print making technique and the print is a mirror image of the carving, which takes a while to get your head around! She demonstrated how to transfer our images on to the lino which we would cut out, we were requested to bring our own images and I chose an oyster catcher. Mandi then demonstrated the various blades used to cut the design into the lino and how to use the tools safely, something I had to be reminded of a couple of times!

I have tried lino cutting before but always had problems getting a clear image when applying the ink. Mandi explanation of loading the roller to get an even coverage was very helpful. Next step was lining up the paper as we were going to add a second colour to the original print, a technique I have never tried before and still need lots of practice.

Having spent time cutting our lino with Mandi offering suggestions as to what works well we applied the ink to our rollers and then evenly onto the lino. Next step laying the paper onto the lino and rubbing with the back of a spoon to ensure the ink transferred onto the paper - now for the exciting part - lifting the paper to view our images. We practiced several times and eventually all had an image we were happy with.

After lunch came the more challenging element, cutting into the lino again to remove the areas of the print we wanted to remain the first colour, it's called Reduction Printing and although Mandi explained it extremely well I think we all struggled with the concept, certainly requires patience and practice. We bravely cut the lino and using the lining up process Mandi showed us printed our 2nd colour, more moments of anticipation followed by sighs of relief as we unveiled the final piece. As you can see from the photos our results were a success though I think my oyster catcher is donning a punk haircut, there is always one rebel!

Thank you Mandi, for your brilliant teaching and patience.

Bridget Cordory.



Pastels Workshop with Stella Mays



Stella Mays set us sketching straight away using her reference photos of a cheetah – we were encouraged to do two small quick black & white charcoal sketches from differing angles, and then a larger, slower sketch identifying the darks and lights.

After this we set about enlarging the portrait head using colour – a very absorbing exercise, some of us using grids to enlarge, others working by eye freehand.

Some were experienced with pastels, others not so much so. A mix of soft pastels and pastel pencils were being used, but we all found the Pastelmat paper a good surface to work on.

The colour sketches emerged slowly over the day, along with plenty of conversation!

Stella came round regularly to give helpful advice, and we all felt we had learned a great deal over the day, and would carry on to finish the work at home – all in all, it was a most enjoyable workshop.

Sarais Crawshaw.



AGM

The AGM on Saturday evening was attended by around 20 members as usual, about 10% of the society. We are looking into holding it as a zoom meeting but although Nature in Art do have the internet now available in the education block it can be a little bit temperamental plus there may be too much echo from the either of the rooms we use (people with hearing aids like me do suffer) so the council is still looking into how they can get around this and hold a good meeting where people can join in via Zoom.

The traditional fish 'n' chips supper was enjoyed afterwards with a glass or two of wine or light refreshment, ending around 8.30 pm some very tired members off home or back to their hotel after a thoroughly enjoyable day.

Sunday with Nick Mackman



Since spending the day with us we are so pleased to announce that Nick Mackman has become one of our patrons. She is an amazing artist and so easy to be with, full of humour and fun, her enthusiasm is boundless. She is now running sculpture safaris in Africa and other wild places in the world so if you want a very special holiday it is worth looking her up on her web site <https://www.nickmackman.com/>

Nick spent the morning regaling us with her artistic tales and history whilst creating before our eyes an aardvark, not a creature many of us are familiar with in everyday life but one which she brought to life as she talked and sculptured the animal from clay and newspaper. Nick creates her work as raku sculpture creating the body from rolled up newspaper stuffed into the sheets of clay these burn away during the firing. She can animate the body into various positions just by squeezing it and sculpting with sticks to smooth out joins etc, sometimes slashing the body and pulling our paper or stuffing more in to create the muscle and bulk. She also creates texture in the skin with flat sticks after she is happy with the final pose.

Of course many years of drawing and knowledge of the creature's anatomy and habits have gone into to her memory banks to make her of sculpting look so effortless but if we tried it would turn into something resembling a cowpat! She wowed us all usual.

After a happy and convivial lunch Nick breezed through the critique in the afternoon, leaving us buoyed up with generous praise and very useful advice. Tea and cake before everyone went home after a very relaxing and happy weekend.

Thank you to everyone who came along and enjoyed themselves without you it wouldn't have happened and we hope you felt you had value for your money, I certainly did.

Valerie Briggs.

Date for your 2026 Diary

October Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th AGM and members weekend at Nature in Art. Saturday

Workshops on Batik with Bridget Cordory and Charcoal and Oils with Stella Mays Saturday evening

AGM to be confirmed

Fish 'n' Chip supper

Sunday morning there will be an illustrated talk by Dr Paul O'Donoghue from the conservation organisation Wildcat Haven and 'The Critique' in the afternoon.

There is no increase in cost this year it is still fabulous value for £95 all meals and refreshments included.

This year we are asking for a £40 non refundable deposits to secure your place.

The booking form is available as a PDF which can be downloaded at the end of this magazine.



Stella Mays



www.wildcathaven.com



Bridget Cordory

TWASI Visit to Cotswold Falconry, Batsford Estate – September 2025

Low, brooding skies and the promise of rain set the scene when five of us – Barbara, Chris, Bridget, Sarais and I gathered at the Cotswold Falconry Centre, set within the beautiful Batsford Estate, in early September.

Fortunately, well-timed breaks in the rain meant the educational flying displays were able to go ahead, offering a fascinating insight into the birds' skills and behaviour in flight. The heavy, humid air made them a little sluggish – sadly there were no generous thermals for soaring flight that day.

One of the highlights was the incredible Secretary Bird, named for the long feathers at the back of its' head that resemble quill pens tucked behind a secretary's ear. While the owls and hawks were captivating as they swooped down towards their prey, the secretary bird hunts in a very different way – striding and stomping with its impressively long legs.

An unexpected moment came when this spectacular bird decided to take flight. What followed was a memorable display of those extraordinary legs as it ran, and ran, and ran... until it disappeared completely from view, much to everyone's amusement.



It was a thoroughly enjoyable day and a valuable opportunity for gathering reference material, and in case you're wondering – there's a reason I rarely use my own reference photos!

Still, I did manage to capture a few images of the beautiful birds.



My thanks to Barbara, Chris, Bridget and Sarais for great company, good humour, and for embracing the elements on this TWASI visit.

Louise Hancox.



TWASI Visit to Cotswold Wildlife Park – September 2025

On a rather cloudy and chilly day in late September, a small group of us visited the Cotswold Wildlife Park near Burford, Oxfordshire.

This venue has always proved an excellent place for gathering reference, though it was extremely busy with families on this Saturday.



Some of the animals were obviously finding the chilly weather an excuse to keep warm, and it was hard to see much behaviour apart from snoozing! The Red Pandas were fast asleep for most of the time, though in full view – luckily they have a very interesting tree to climb in, which would make a splendid addition to any artistic work.

The Clouded Leopards, of which I think there were 3, were mostly snuggled down on their platforms, but at least one was walking about, and gave us a good view of their beautifully patterned coat, amongst the foliage and tree trunks of their large enclosure.





A little flock of beautifully patterned Guinea Fowl were walking about freely on the path into the Wolf Wood, making a noisy conversation with each other.



I caught glimpses of at least one Wolf, and further on, the Pallas cat was climbing around the twiggy tree branches in its enclosure, making it very difficult to see its whole body at once.

The gardens and planting all around the Park are always spectacular, and make a very positive setting for the animals.

Sarais Crawshaw.

TWASI Visit to Twycross Zoo – 9th November 2025

The day began with a coffee in the View Restaurant overlooking the Snow Leopards, with Sarais, Pauline, Rosemary, Colin, Neil and myself.



They have 2 Snow Leopards, Khumbu born at the Big Cat Sanctuary and Nuri a female recently arrived from Salzburg Zoo. They don't appear to have been introduced yet.

Khumbu rushed over to the end panel and raised his paws on the glass, to watch the humans on the other side, much to their surprise.



Our next stop was to the four Chapman Zebra who were outside. The weather was overcast, not cold for the time of year but not all the animals braved the outside. We spent time with the Giraffe, Rhino and Primates before heading back to the View Restaurant for lunch.



The choice of hot food at all outlets was limited to fish and chips, burgers, pizza, pasta etc. A bowl of hot soup would have been a welcome alternative.

After eating we saw the snow leopard Khumbu wandering around again, and then found the Amur Leopard relaxing on a platform in front of the window.

The Humboldt Penguins didn't seem to mind the weather, with some standing in a group, while others enjoyed the water, diving and splashing around.

Some changes have taken place with a New Global Conservation Centre and area for Bornean Orangutan habitat being built. The Vicuna are in a different area and we briefly saw one Sumatran Tiger.

Please be aware that Twycross now **charge for parking** each time. There is a hefty fine for non-payment. Pay at the time of booking tickets online or at the pay stations inside the entrance. Zoo entrance fee now lasts for 1 year, so return as often as you wish.

Joy Roberts.



TWASI Visit to Slimbridge – 18th January 2026

On a chilly damp day, a group of us met up at Slimbridge for a Get-Together and the first Visit of the year.



Some of us decided to take the path towards the Severn estuary, passing through the new spectacular willow arches, and were soon greeted by a friendly robin beside us singing a lovely little song, and another higher up a tree - it looked as if they were planning a nest up there.

In the same group of trees a tiny Goldcrest was flitting rapidly around overhead, so we had to crane our necks to try and identify it against the light.



The day was rather misty, so the view from the Estuary hide was rather obscured, but we could see flocks of Canada & Greylag Geese and Lapwing over the wet grasses, and other birds such as Curlew, Bewick & Mute Swans and many & various ducks & a heron.

A stop at the bird-feeding station rewarded us with a sight of a large family of long-tailed tits feeding amongst the other tits and robins.

We had lunch together in the restaurant, compared photographs taken, and had a good chat about TWASI events and our own endeavours.

Sadly, after lunch it rained incessantly, so I don't think many of us stayed for the wild bird feed – maybe another time.

Sarais Crawshaw.



TWASI New Patron – Nick Mackman



Nick Mackman is an award-winning sculptor of ceramic and bronze animal sculptures. She has been widely exhibited and in 2015 she won the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF) Wildlife Artist of the Year competition. In 2012 she was Overall Runner-up and category winner in 2010.

Her animal sculptures have found home with, amongst others, John Cleese, Dame Judi Dench, Chris Packham, David Shepherd and Viscountess Serena Linley. She has been commissioned by British Airways and the BBC Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition. Her work is held in numerous private collections and is prized for its striking intensity and personality.

Many of her subjects are highly endangered and she actively supports the work of animal and nature conservation charities at home and abroad.

Artist's Statement

"My art is informed by my life-long love of animals. I grew up with a dog by my side and learned from an early age that every animal has its own distinctive personality. As an artist my work is a continually evolving exploration of animal behaviour. I never start a new piece without making that connection with my subject. I need to understand the animal, its environment, behaviour and personality. I need to know its story and what it's feeling; is it vulnerable, sleepy, proud, frightened, angry, and playful?"

"Most of my animal sculptures are based on observations made in the wild. This is the only way to really connect with the animal on its own level. I'm not interested in making crude anthropomorphisms. For me, it's disrespectful and betrays a failure to understand and relate to the subject. My work is inspired by what I see in the wild. A slight tilt of the head, licking of the lips or pricking of the ears can speak volumes. These are the subtle details that bring a sculpture to life and transform it from a purely representational model to an expressive and emotive artwork. Ultimately, it's the presence in the room which I find so exciting and which makes sculpture so powerful."

Nick Mackman.

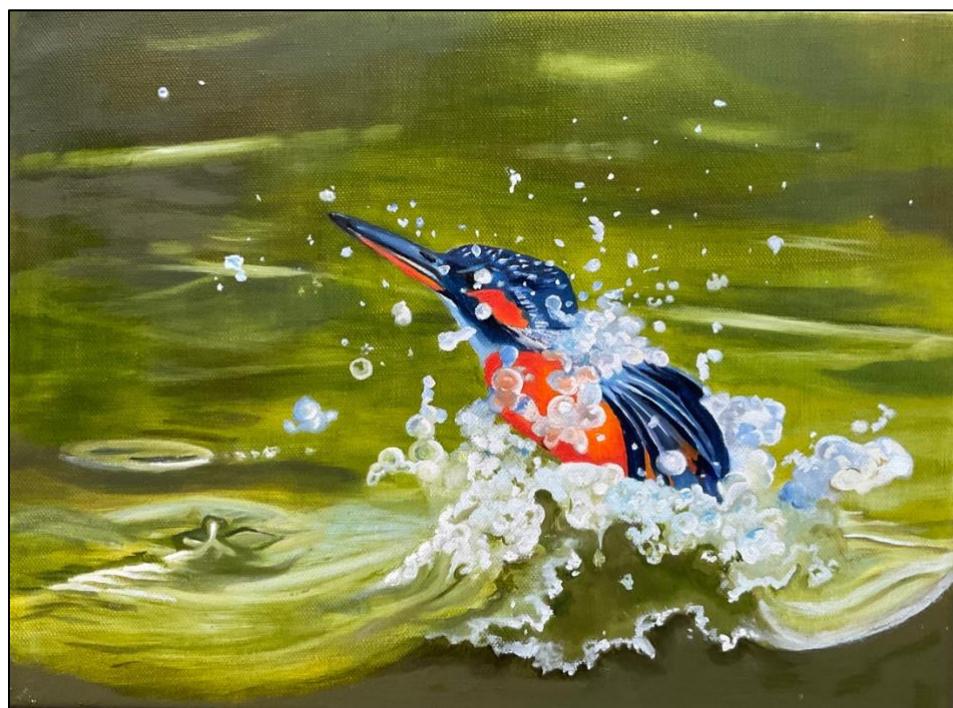
New TWASI Member – Gill Barratt

I describe myself as a “nature person”. I live at the end of a track in rural France, surrounded by fields and forest. I take my artistic inspiration from my surroundings and from the animals and birds that live here. For my holidays I explore the underwater world with my scuba diving buddies and I have recently started adding ocean creature paintings to my portfolio.



I'm a self-taught artist working mainly in oils and coloured pencils. I'm a member of the UK Coloured Pencil Society and the Association of Animal Artists. I'm a keen supporter of the Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (my land is a designated LPO Refuge) and of Sea Shepherd France, to whom I donate the proceeds of the sales of selected paintings.

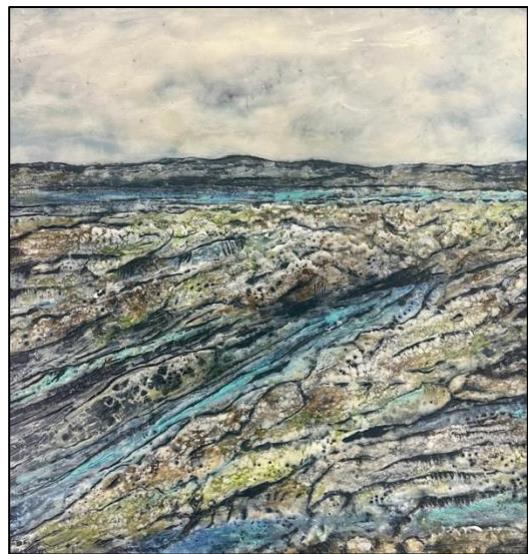
Gill Barratt.



New TWASI Member – Gill Barrett

Gill is a Cotswold based multimedia artist whose main inspiration is flowers and birds in nature. She creates vibrant and unique paintings, using a variety of innovative methods by combining encaustic wax, inks and hand-dyed tissue paper. Her favourite medium to work in is encaustic wax due to the versatility of it in achieving both texture and luminous layers. She also paints heavily textured wild seascapes in encaustic wax.

Gill has written a craft book which will explain how to hand-dye tissue paper and then how to use it in a range of projects, including as a background for art projects. This is due for release in May 2026 with Search Press.



Later this year, Gill has an Artist in Residence at Nature in Art from September 15th to 20th and her first solo exhibition at the Gardens Gallery in Cheltenham from 15th – 19th December.

Gill is a recently retired special needs teacher who now volunteers with children's art activities at Nature in Art, near Gloucester.

Email: gillieb60@hotmail.co.uk

Website: www.gillbarrettart.co.uk

Instagram page: www.instagram.com/gillieb60



New TWASI Member – Richard Crabtree

As a professional artist and tutor Richard has lived and worked in Worcestershire for many years. After studying at Bournville College of Art he worked within the commercial graphic design industry until 2004 when he committed to becoming a full-time artist.



He holds regular weekly drawing and painting classes as well as teaching privately and demonstrating to Art Societies around the country. Although he teaches a wide range of subjects and mediums his passion is, and has always been, to draw and paint pictures of local wildlife and its environment in watercolour and oil paint.

Through his art he hopes to promote the beauty and fragility of nature and the importance of conservation now and for future generations.

Richard Crabtree.
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Face book – Richard Crabtree
Instagram - Richard Crabtree 24



New TWASI Member – Jo Harmison

I am a wildlife artist based in the North-East of England. I've always been a lover of animals, and that connection runs right through my art. Animals have been part of my daily life for as long as I can remember, and I love creating my own reference photos of wildlife as much as I enjoy bringing them to life on paper. Although I enjoyed drawing at school, it wasn't until December 2024 that I truly returned to creating — a paint-by-numbers set rekindled the spark, and soon I was exploring different mediums, subjects and techniques.

Pastels quickly became my favourite medium, for the immediacy and depth they bring, though I also enjoy working in charcoal, pencil, watercolour, acrylics and oils. My focus is wildlife of all kinds, from the character and strength of big mammals to the delicate presence of birds.

This year I've begun sharing my work more widely, entering the British Art Prize and the Wildlife Art Society International exhibition and I'm delighted to have recently become a member of TWASI.

For me, painting wildlife isn't only about likeness — it's about atmosphere, presence and connection. I'm especially interested in conservation and endangered species, and I hope my work plays a small part in encouraging people to value and protect the animals we share the world with, from iconic species to the British wildlife close to home.

Jo Harmison.



New TWASI Member – Caroline Hughes



I live and grew up in the Gloucestershire area surrounded by some of the most beautiful countryside and Nature, so I have always had a keen interest in the natural world, animals and birds.

Being out in the wild countryside is definitely my "happy place". I love being out on walks with my husband Nick, both of us taking photos of anything we see of interest, he is a keen Wildlife photographer specialising in birds, so naturally I have progressed to using his photos as reference for my drawings.

Although I have had no formal art training there is a strong artistic streak running through my family which burst through quite late on in life for me.

My medium of choice is Artists Coloured Pencils which I discovered

5 years ago. I use them on different surfaces but usually on Drafting Film. I find I can get fine details, depth of colour, great tonal values and textures using pencils on drafting film with layering and subtraction methods.

Caroline Hughes.



New International TWASI Member – Géraldine Radon

Belgian wildlife painter, Géraldine Ragon develops a body of work focused on the presence of animals within quiet, familiar territories. She mainly paints animals from Northern Europe, with a particular attention to Nordic landscapes, their light and silent atmospheres.

She maintains a long-standing drawing practice, and this continuity informs an approach grounded in observation, restraint and atmosphere rather than narration or symbolism, portraying the animal as a conscious being within its environment.

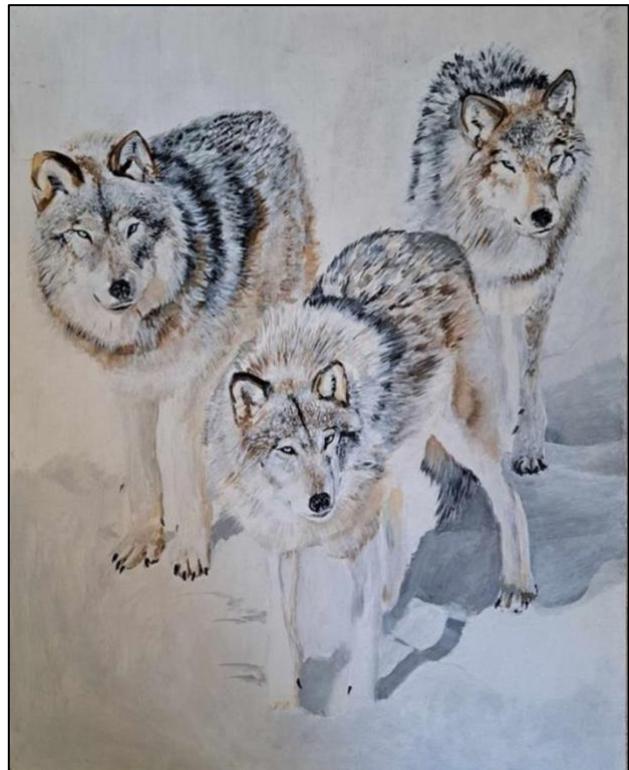
Education Self taught artist **Exhibitions** Géraldine Ragon has recently exhibited in art galleries in Belgium and Italy.

Her works are held in private collections in Germany, France, India, and other countries.

Contact Email: gydee72@gmail.com

Website: <https://painting-wild.webnode.be/>

Instagram: [gydee_artist](https://www.instagram.com/gydee_artist/)



New TWASI Member – Mike Howard

I was fortunate enough to be born and brought up in on the outskirts Ipswich with the beautiful Suffolk countryside on our doorstep. A lot of my childhood had been spent doing boyish things like fishing and damming streams etc, how I loved to be in the countryside on a warm sunny day.

It was in late 1986 we moved to a beautiful village just outside of Ipswich. One of myself and my wife great interests is to visit art galleries where we buy many lovely watercolour paintings by artists such as Michael Peterson and Rita Ling etc, and it was then I began to take an interest in taking up painting, which I then did by experimenting with watercolours.

I thought my main subject of interest for me to paint was going to be landscapes, so not too dissimilar to the ones we'd had hanging on our walls at home. I'd always had an interest in wildlife and we were fortunate enough to live in a village where we a had well known bird artist Raymond Watson as a near neighbour.

It was about this time I went to exhibition by well known bird artist Terence Bond. All of us probably know Terry's work very well, and he lived in a village not too far away from where we lived.



I was lucky enough to find out that a cousin of mine promoted Terence Bonds work internationally as well as promoting his work in the UK too. I had been under the impression then that Terry being a perfectionist, was aloof a little about how he painted and the materials he was using. I found him to be the opposite, and on a number of occasions I could sit with him and he'd show me how to apply the acrylic medium which was his medium of choice. He showed me how to look at colours, in his case birds, and how the background colours should compliment, not fight with the subject matter.

It was in the 1990's I wanted to paint with others who too had an interest in wildlife so I enrolled at the local college art school who actually ran a wildlife painting group one evening a week. It was a real game changer for me and some of us then decided upon the advice of a painter we'd met from Norfolk, to join TWASI.

I painted almost every day, often just in the evening until about 2003 when I'd started a new business often travelling overseas. My time for painting began to get less and less and when I did find the time, found it hard to concentrate and I began to make excuses in my mind for not painting which now find nearly 20 years on, so sad!

I am now just 77 years of age and in good general health and back living in the beautiful countryside and painting again and rejoined TWASI.

Mike Howard.

SUMMER COMPETITION - A COMPETITION FOR ALL TWASI MEMBERS.

1. Entries may be in any media, the **wildlife** theme for 2026 is: **SUN AND SHADE**
2. Entries must be entered as a jpeg image (300dpi, up to 5MB), sent to saraiscrawshaw@aol.com, or an A4 photograph posted to TWASI, Appletrees, Main Street, Willey, Rugby CV23 0SH.
3. Closing date for entries: **1st July 2026**.
4. Entries will be judged by the TWASI Central Council members, the winning entry will be shown on the TWASI website and in the following edition of "On the Wildside" Magazine, and if available, may be exhibited at the following Annual Exhibition.
5. Prize: **£50**.
6. Maximum entries per member – **2**.

Creating wildlife Art is Wild!

A quick insight into creating wildlife paintings.

The base material for all my art is meeting the wildlife in the wild: which means a lot of travelling and a lot of photography. I achieve this by using a husband who works the camera and generally maintains the equipment. That means I can concentrate on absorbing the sights and smells of the habitats and imagine the images we will capture. To do this, we use a Canon R7 mirrorless camera with a 100-400mm zoom lens F5.6-8. This is a good compromise to get really good photos without lugging around a giant lens. We also use a video camera which has an enormous zoom but can be difficult to use, especially in the sun. It will vary from place to place, but generally I expect to take about 2000 photos during a 10-day visit combined with an hour or so of video.

Now we've got all the gear ready, we need to travel to see where the animals are. This can also be combined with site seeing tours but mostly, I like small adventure groups to concentrate on the task in hand. My last few adventures were to Canada & Alaska (mainly site seeing but we did manage to see some great whales), Tanzania (African wildlife combined with an introduction for my grand-daughter), Sri Lanka (to see Leopards as that the apex predator and more easily found than in Africa or India) and recently, Costa Rica (Jungle landscape, mainly for birds)

Commissions, collaborations and relationships



Graffiti King

The subjects for my work are quite varied, although mostly from the animal kingdom somewhere. Sometimes circumstances and co-incidents lead to work and sometimes you have to make it yourself.

Having a studio in Barnabas Arts Centre in Newport, I meet other artists and we share ideas and concepts. There I became friends with an abstract street artist, Antony Smith AKA Consumesmith. This relationship led to us jointly producing a new work, *Graffiti King*. which was a combination of my realistic wildlife art and his street art style. It's good to explore other directions. You never know where it will lead.

Whilst we were on holiday in south India, we met a nice couple who were in the next room and chatted each morning about the wildlife we had seen the day before (mainly did we see a Tiger!). Six months later they appeared serendipitously at the Cheltenham Fine Art fair where I was exhibiting with some other artists. Once we got over the shock of meeting again, they became one of my clients and I have since painted two commissions for them. One was a tiger (obviously) and interestingly, the other was a forest scene which turned out so good, I now have produced prints from it.

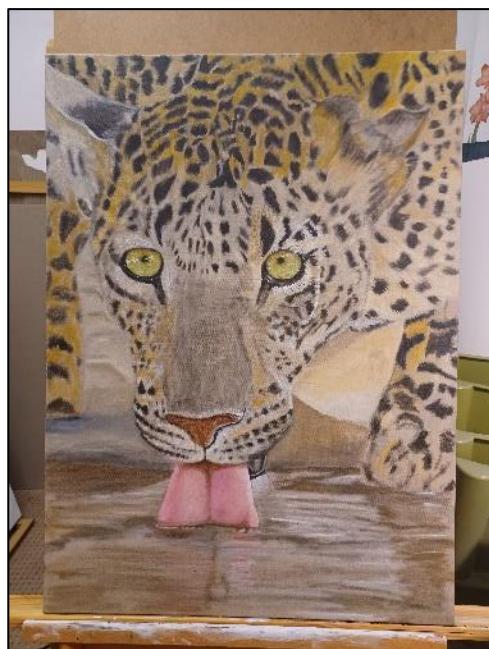


Sri Lankan Blue Magpie

Recently, In Sri Lanka, we became friends with the local guide and conservationist and he kindly gave me a stunning photograph of a leopard that he taken (shown below as Leopard in progress). In return, I sketched a local bird and inserted the image into a business card template for him. I will also send him a print of the Sri Lankan Blue Magpie that I later painted.

One of the great things of animal adventures is that you meet some great people, all of whom have a love of the animal kingdom and their own stories to tell.

Sri Lanka and Costa Rica



Leopard in progress

My last two trips were to Sri Lanka and Costa Rica for very different reasons. Despite a number of trips to Africa, I had always struggled to get any sort of meaningful image of a Leopard. This is because in Africa, Lions are apex predators and Leopards hide away from them, often dragging their kill into a tree somewhere. I had seen Leopards hidden in a bush or in a tree viewed with binoculars, but nothing I could paint. In Sri Lanka, they are the apex predator and a much more widely visible.

The climate in Sri Lanka various from place to place with a more humid area in the centre of the island. Unfortunately, a cyclone hit the island whilst we were there and so we had a

lot of rain. Even the bad weather didn't dampen our spirits as there were other excitements such as pulling other vehicles out of the mud and going sideways on rough tracks! But we did see a number of Leopards which has developed into a painting in progress.



Yellow throated Toucan

Our last trip was to Costa Rica in Central America. The reason we chose this was because it has extensive rain forest and was home to many beautiful birds including the many hummingbirds, the quetzal and a number of different toucans. We also saw a couple of sloths, both the two-toed and three-toed and amazingly, one walked just by us in the pouring rain. In the rain forest it rained for a time most days and we were told the clue is in the name, but it's all part of the adventure. It is difficult to spot many of the birds in the rainforest but enterprising cafes would put out fruit and so they feasted nearby and we were able to have a coffee and take some photos. Although I've painted a lot of birds in the past, most were raptors or owls and I'm looking forward to creating the bright colourful images from Costa Rica perhaps even a squirrel coming down a tree!



Christine Dadd.

Sea Otter Artwork Smashes Record in Conservation Auction

Louise Hancox watched in astonishment as her sea otter artwork, *Praying for Kelp*, floated into the spotlight and smashed every previous record at the 2025 Explorers Against Extinction Sketch for Survival art auction in November.



The artwork sold for **£5,500**, the highest hammer price ever achieved in the competition's history. Every penny goes to wildlife conservation initiatives. For Louise, this was more than a personal milestone. It felt like a moment of recognition for an overlooked marine hero.

"Praying for Kelp is part of my Keystone series — a body of work honouring unsung wildlife heroes holding entire ecosystems together," she says. *"It was inspired by a trip to the wild coast of British Columbia, where I watched a lone sea otter drifting in the sun, paws folded as if in quiet prayer. What I didn't realise was that beneath the surface, she was shaping an entire underwater world."*

Sea otters are a keystone species: by eating sea urchins, they allow kelp forests — vital underwater carbon sinks — to survive. Once hunted to near-extinction, they remain endangered today.

"She floats as if weightless, yet carries the fate of a forest, a coastline, and a hidden world beneath the waves," Louise says.

"With her survival, a living sea breathes."

Praying for Kelp was also the winner of 2025 TWASI Summer Competition with the theme "Wild Coast".

Louise Hancox.

Art With a Purpose: Hearing back from Tsavo

Back in 2022, I completed the largest painting I'd ever attempted — and it also happened to be one of my very first acrylic pieces. (Yes... I absolutely jumped in at the deep end!)



Through Africa Wildlife Art, I was paired with photographer **Thomas Vijayan** to create a painting inspired by his stunning reference of a herd of African elephants. The project was designed to raise funds for conservation, with a portion of the sale pledged to support wildlife protection on the ground.

Fast forward to 2025, and a collector visiting one of the galleries I feature in all year round, fell in love with the piece and decided to purchase it. By this point, Africa Wildlife Art had relocated fully to Africa, so together we made the decision for the donation to go directly to **Tsavo Trust**, who have a UK donation base through **Tusk Trust**. As they already work closely with Tsavo Trust, we knew the funds would be going to a reputable and impactful cause.

The painting, titled "**A Long Road Home**", measured 130 x 100cm before the framing and was acrylic on professional linen superfine canvas, beautifully framed by my local framers **Ian Grant Design**. It features a herd of African elephants crossing

dusty terrain, and I loved the challenge of suggesting both movement and atmosphere within the scene. It was also my very first full landscape-style composition — something I plan to explore much more of, in some future pieces!

In August, once the collector's payment plan was complete and the donation could be sent, Tsavo Trust contacted me personally to confirm they had received the full **£2,000** donation and offering such a lovely thank you. They explained that the funds were invested in strengthening security around **Tsavo National Park**, supporting the **Big Tusker Project** and helping monitor and protect elephants and other species in the conservation area.

Their main work focusses around big tuskers, and with only **25 estimated to remain in the world** (most of them in the Tsavo region) it feels incredibly rewarding to know this painting contributed in some small way to their protection. I'm also hugely grateful to **Artworks 2 Gallery** for connecting the painting with its collector too, especially as it was too large to hang in my usual space and instead required a private viewing — which turned out to be such a wonderful success.

To learn more about Tsavo Trust, visit:

<https://tsavotrust.org/>

To see more of my work:

<https://www.spwildlifeart.com/>

Sophie Parkhill.



Barry Walding Obituary

Barry was a member of TWASI from the early days on and off throughout the last 30 years has sadly passed. He was an extremely kind and generous man to fellow artists. His beautiful paintings were much admired and collected and he tackled so many different subjects other than wildlife.

In his youth Barry was inspired by a painting by artist David Shepherd, entitled *March Sunlight*. Barry eventually met David Shepherd in 1977 and three years later left his job at Rolls Royce and took up painting as a full-time occupation.

"I'm a keen conservationist with a love of the British Countryside and its wildlife which has featured prominently in my work. I enjoy painting anything and everything. A lot of artists like to specialise in things like locomotives or aeroplanes or portraiture, and there's nothing wrong with that, but I enjoy the variety."

I've been doing it ever since and have taken part in exhibitions throughout the country at places like the Yorkshire Railway Museum and the Mall Galleries in London, and had three successful exhibitions at the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust in Slimbridge."

Barry's work has also been on show at Nature in Art, near Gloucester, as artist in residence on five occasions. He has produced paintings of everything from portraits in the style of the Pre-Raphaelites through to animals and transport. Some of his paintings have been used to raise money for charities such as the RAF Benevolent Fund and Battle of Britain Historical Society.

Valerie Briggs.



The photo montage is of "Barry in residence at Nature in Art and the cygnet and water vole were exhibited at the 2024 Annual Exhibition sadly to due to family circumstances Barry was unable to exhibit in 2025."

Dr. Jane Goodall OBE 1934 - 2025



We were so sad to learn of the death of Jane Goodall at the age of 91 in October last year. We were delighted when she agreed to be one of our patrons and add us to the legion of great causes that she supported.

She was a tireless advocate of the protection of the natural world, described as a messenger of peace. An ethologist and primatologist, she revolutionised the understanding of chimpanzee behaviour. Starting her studies at the age of 26 in Africa, immersed in a largely male world, she stood out as an exceptional individual with vision and determination.

In March 1964, she married Dutch National Geographic photographer Hugo van Lawick after they met in Tanzania where Jane was working. They had one son, and in Jane's words, the relationship ended gradually after a decade. Later she married Tanzanian Park Director Derek Bryceson who left her widowed in 1980.

She was awarded the OBE in 2004. Her damehood was in recognition for her decades of study of chimpanzees and her global efforts in conservation and environmental education. She also received Japan's Kyoto Prize in 1990. The UNESCO Gold Medal Award and France's Legion d' Honneur were both given to her in 2006.

Jane recorded a 45-minute interview on Netflix to be released after her death and for the last 10 minutes she was left alone with the camera. It's intensely moving. Her final message for the humanity on Planet Earth. Available on other platforms, if you haven't already seen it as most people have, seek it out.

John Horton.

THE WILDLIFE ART SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL - DAY VISITS 2026.

Please do wear your Membership Badges – it helps newer Members to get to know you!

SLIMBRIDGE GET-TOGETHER – Sunday 18th January.

MIDDLETON LAKES RSPB, Tamworth, Staffs. B78 2BB – Sunday 22nd March

www.rspb.org.uk Lakes, rivers & canal, wetlands, woodland. Walks. Many waterbirds, possibly otters. Large Heronry. Café & toilets in courtyard of Middleton Hall. Dogs on leads.

STANWICK LAKES, Stanwick, Northants. NN9 6GY – Sunday 26th April.

www.stanwicklakes.org.uk 750 acres nature reserve, with many waterfowl, waders, possibly muntjac deer, otters, owls. Should be mating behaviour at this time, possibly young. Walks. Bird Hides, Visitor centre, café. Parking all day £6.90 cash/card.

SLIMBRIDGE WWT, Slimbridge, Glos. GL2 7BT – Sunday 17th May.

www.wwt.org.uk Another visit to this centre in spring, with mating, young, & plenty of breeding birds to be watched. Adults £20.85 (Gift Aid), Seniors £18.65 (Gift Aid) WWT Members free. Save 10% on prices by booking online.

NEWPORT WETLANDS RSPB, West Nash Rd, Newport. NP18 2BZ - Sunday 21 June.

www.rspb.org.uk Nationally important RSPB reserve overlooking Severn estuary. 438 hectares reedbed, saltmarsh, saline lagoons & lowland wet grassland. Might see bearded tit, avocet, bittern, water vole, otter. Café & toilets, parking free for RSPB members, £5 non-members. **Please contact Tracey-Anne Sitch on: traceyannesitch@sky.com**

HAMERTON ZOO PARK, Steeple Gidding, Huntingdon, PE28 5RE – Sunday 5th July.

www.hamertonzoopark.com Compact Zoo with good collection Tigers including white, serval, cheetah, small cats, bears, maned wolf, otter, binturong, raccoon, zebra. Café. No Dogs. Adults £19.99, Seniors £18.99

BRITISH WILDLIFE CENTRE, Eastbourne Rd, Newchapel, Lingfield, Surrey. RH7 6LF

Sunday 20th September. www.britishwildlifecentre.co.uk All-British wildlife, Badger, Barn & other owls, Buzzard, Deer, Fox, Otter, Pine Marten, Red Squirrel, Wildcat, Hedgehog. Adult £17 (£16 online) Senior £14.50 (£13.50 online)

WELNEY WWT, nr Wisbech, Cambs. CB6 1UG – Sunday 1st November.

www.wwt.org.uk Wetland site with many waterfowl, marsh harrier, barn owl, hares. Hides, Café. Whooper Swan feeding at 3.30pm. Adult £6.30 (£7 Gift Aid), Seniors £5.40 (£6.50 Gift Aid)

BRANDON MARSH NATURE CENTRE, Brandon Lane, Coventry. CV3 3GW – Sunday 15th November.

www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk Pools, reedbeds, grassland & woodland, with 9 hides. Kingfishers, water fowl, possibly otters, muntjac deer. Winter murmurations of up to 50,000 starlings at sunset, about 4pm. Adults £4.75, Seniors £3.75, Free to Warwicks Wildlife members.

Please let Sarais or the Hosting Member know well beforehand if you plan to join any of the visits and you will be sent fuller details.

If you decide to come at the last minute, are going to arrive late, or can't come after all, please text me on 07507 959987 so I'm not left waiting at the gate!

Email Sarais Crawshaw – saraiscrawshaw@aol.com or – 07507 859987

The Wildlife Art Society International
AGM & MEMBERS WEEKEND AT NATURE IN ART, GIOS
SATURDAY 3rd AND SUNDAY 4th OCTOBER 2026

Weekend event: the tick boxes are word text boxes, left finger click either fill with a Y or a colour, workshop spaces are limited so members have priority plenty of room on the Sunday for guests.

I wish to participate in this weekend event at a cost of £95 per member including all meals and refreshments (not including accommodation).

As a guest £110

Please indicate which Saturday workshop you wish to attend

Bridget Cordory Batik

Stella Mays Charcoal and Oils

THERE MAY BE AN EXTRA COST OF FOR MATERIALS FOR BOTH WORKSHOPS PAYABLE ON THE DAY

The AGM will be held on Saturday 3rd October at 6pm

If you are not able to take part in the whole event it is possible to attend as follows:

Saturday workshops only member £55

As a Guest £60 (inc. refreshments & lunch)

Saturday evening meal 'Fish n chip' supper at 7.30pm £18 per person.

(Non members guests welcome but numbers are limited please check with Valerie)

Sunday to be confirmed - all day £45 per member

Guest £50

Morning illustrated talk, lunch and refreshments, critique and tea and cake

Sunday morning only an illustrated talk TBC 10.30 am to 12.30pm £20

Name _____ Tel: _____

Please send a non refundable deposit of £40 or the full amount with the booking form. This will confirm your place on the weekend.

Valerie Briggs and the TWASI Treasurer will confirm all bookings by email.
Any banking details will be destroyed. All fees are non refundable.

Please make cheques payable to The Wildlife Art Society International

Bank transfer Barclays Bank Sort code 20-17-92 A/c No 50953245 ref TWASIMW2026

Please send copy of form when making a transfer to valeriebriggs1@outlook.com

*Please send copy of form with payment by cheque to
TWASI Members Weekend, Mrs V Briggs, 1 St Stephens Terrace, Droitwich Road, Worcester WR3 7HU*

