

# Shoot for the Moon

Monthly news and tips from  
Landscape Photographer  
Gill Moon



## July 2020 Vol 7 - Summer Landscapes

# Hello

and welcome to the July edition of 'Shoot for the Moon'

As I am writing this the sun is shining from a bright blue sky and the temperatures are soaring - traits which are not often considered good for landscape photography. Therefore I thought it would be good to look at summer landscapes and offer some tips for getting the best out of the season.

I hope you will find issue 7 interesting and informative. I am always keen to receive feedback so please get in touch if you have anything you would like to share.

Remember to aim high, be inspired and shoot for the moon! Thank you and happy photographing

Gill

If you would like to get in touch please email me at [gill@gillmoon.com](mailto:gill@gillmoon.com)

# Summer Landscapes



Dawn over the marshes at Ramsholt. Nikon 24-70mm lens at 46mm. F14 at 1/5 second, ISO 100, 0.6 ND Graduated filter. Lighting coming from the right creating a nice shadow to the left of the tree connecting the smaller tree in the distance.

This months shoot for the moon is all about summer landscape photography. You may often hear landscape photographers complaining about photography in the summer months as the long days and harsh light can often prove challenging. However if you are prepared to search for the best light and be creative with your thinking then landscape photography during the summer can be really enjoyable and rewarding.

So if you are determined not to hang up your camera for the next few months these are my tips for shooting during the summer.

## **Work with the best available light.**

This may sound really obvious but good light will really make your pictures stand out. Atmospheric haze during summer days can be a real problem. It can leave the landscape

looking washed out with very little contrast. Summer days are long and by 7 or 8am the sun has lost most of the soft glow of dawn and has a much harsher affect on the landscape with dark shadows and bright highlights creating tricky shooting conditions.

## **Shooting at Sunrise**

This is my favourite time to head out for photography. The light is soft and has a beautiful affect on the landscape and there is generally no one else around. Admittedly you have to get up pretty early for sunrise in the summer and in June this means being out at your chosen location by 4am at the latest. However it is definitely worth it. On still mornings if you choose the right location you may also have the added bonus of some mist to add a bit of atmosphere to your images.



**Nikon 24-70mm lens at 56mm, F14 at 1/10 second ISO100 0.6ND graduated filter.**

The image above was shot at sunrise at Butley Creek on a perfectly still morning. The colours were quite muted because of the band of cloud on the horizon but the mist definitely adds some atmosphere.

The image below shows another misty morning on the river, this time at Ramsholt on the River Deben. This is not a traditional place for sunrise photography, it is much better suited to sunsets. The sun rises east of the river and as Ramsholt itself is on the east bank you cannot get any shots of sunrise over the water. However you can get some nice side lighting and some lovely atmospheric shots if the morning is still and there is mist over the water.



**Nikon 24-70mm lens at 70mm. F16 at 1/10 second, ISO 100, 0.6 ND graduated filter.**

The light changes very quickly in the summer with the best morning light between sunrise and two hours afterwards. This image at Shingle Street was taken about an hour after sunrise with the sidelighting adding a lovely glow to the beach.



**Nikon 24-70mm lens at 48mm. F14 at 1/8 second, ISO 160**

As the sun climbs higher into the sky the shadows start to become more pronounced and the light begins to lose its softness. Sometimes it is worth using a telephoto lens to cut out the sky and focus in on smaller areas of the landscape. The image below was taken at Ramsholt Church about an hour and a half after sunrise. By this time the sky was quite blue and had lost many of its sunrise hues. I used a tighter crop and shallower depth of field and focused in on some of the flowers in the churchyard.



**Nikon 70-200mm lens at 98mm. F5.6 at 1/125 sec, ISO 100**

## Shooting at Sunset

I don't shoot at sunset as much as I do sunrise as I prefer the quality of light at the beginning of the day, but sunset can still be a rewarding time of day even in the summer. The trick is to watch the weather and learn what conditions might give you the best results. Usually if you have a band of cloud sitting on the horizon, even if its blue above the colours will be disappointing.

For vibrant sunset colour you will need some cloud in the sky, ideally at various levels in the atmosphere. I use the **Clear Outside App** which gives you a prediction of the amount of cloud cover at low, medium and high levels. It also predicts fog. It is not always accurate but its a good place to start. Use this in conjunction with the Photographers Ephermis App to help plan your shoots and work out where the sun will set in relation to the features in the landscape.

Choose your weather conditions carefully. Clear skies often don't give that much colour but can create very tranquil scenes. Stormy weather where rain may be imminent can produce some striking results.

Sometimes the hour before sunset can produce some of the best light but don't be tempted to pack away too early as the blue hour after the sun has gone down can also yield some lovely images.



Nikon 24-70mm lens at 24mm. F16 at 0.5 second, ISO100.  
0.9ND graduated filter.

It is also worth looking in the opposite direction

from where the sun is setting. This image of Bawdsey Manor, below, was taken at 180 degrees to the sun with some lovely light creating a striking contrast with the dark sky behind the manor.



Nikon 24-70mm lens at 60mm. F14 at 1/13 second, ISO 100.  
0.6 ND graduated filter

Similarly this image at Orford was taken at 90 degrees to the setting sun. The pale mauve hues in the sky and water compliment the colours of the sea lavender on the saltmarsh.



Nikon 24-70mm lens at 31mm. F16 at 1/3 second, ISO 100 0.6 ND graduated filter, 6 stop ND filter.

## Shooting in the middle of the day

In the summer this is the more challenging time to take photographs. To get the best results choose your compositions carefully and think about your viewpoint and the elements that you want to include in the frame.

The image of Shingle Street below was taken when the sun was quite high in the sky, but there were lots of lovely fluffy clouds which added plenty of interest. I used a slow shutter speed to slightly blur the clouds and the flag by the cottages. I felt the image had more interest in the sky so placed my horizon nearer to the bottom of the frame. Hopefully this image conveys the wide open skies that Suffolk is famous for.



**Nikon 24-70mm lens at 24mm. F16 at 18 seconds, ISO 200, 0.6 ND graduated filter and 10 stop ND filter.**

Conversely in the following image of Saxtead Mill, which was taken at midday, the sky was quite uninteresting and the foreground held much more appeal. I chose a low viewpoint and focused on the mill to try to give the effect of being in amongst the flowers. When I processed this image I lightened the foreground and reduced the saturation and clarity of the meadow grasses and flowers.



**Nikon 24-70mm lens at 60mm. F14 at 1/100 second, ISO 400**

Sometimes the light can be too harsh or feel too flat and then converting to black and white might give a more appealing image.



**Nikon 24-70mm lens at 27mm. F11 at 1/125 second, ISO 320**

The time of day has a massive effect on the quality and direction of the light and hence the look and feel of your image. On the following page are two images taken at Ramsholt Quay - one at sunrise and one at sunset. Both images feature almost exactly the same composition but they are very different images. The first one, taken at sunrise, is very restful and there are no shadows, the colours are also very muted because of the misty conditions.

The second image was taken just under an hour before sunset. The shadows are long and are prominent in the foreground of this image. The

colours are also brighter and more saturated and perhaps speak of summer a little more than those of the first image. This is perhaps a more cheerful image and one that depicts summer a little better. However I am not sure which one I prefer - I think it depends on my mood.

Ultimately the type of image you create will come down to your choice of location, the timing of your visit and the quality of the light available when you are there.



**Nikon 24-70mm lens at 24mm. F16 at 1/8 second, ISO 100. 0.6 ND graduated filter.**



**Nikon 24-70mm lens at 24mm. F16 at 5 seconds, ISO 100. 0.9 ND graduated filter and 6 stop ND filter.**

## Focusing on Detail

Sometimes when the light is not good enough to capture far reaching views it is better to use a longer lens, cut out the sky and pick out some of the detail in the landscape. The two images below show a good example of this. In the first wider view the sky is very washed out and adds little to the overall image. I then focused in on a small section of the poppy field for the second image and I think this is much more successful.



**Nikon 70-200 mm lens at 200mm. F5.6 at 1/1600 second ISO 400**



**Nikon 70-200 mm lens at 200mm. F3.5 at 1/1600 second at ISO 400**

Both these images were taken in flat light on a day when there was lots of high cloud cover. This is ideal for flower close ups as there are no harsh shadows to contend with.

Alternatively in the next image I focused in on some more poppies but this time shot into the sun which gives the flowers a lovely translucent effect.

Here are a few tips for shooting flowers or vegetation in detail:

1. use a telephoto lens and focus in tightly.
2. use a shallow depth of field to blur the background.
3. Use surrounding foliage to create blocks of colour in the foreground of your shot by physically getting really close to some elements which will then be rendered soft.
4. Shoot into the sun for a soft hazy effect.



**Shooting Details:**

**Above**  
Nikon 70-200mm lens at 200mm. F5.6 at 1/320 seconds, ISO 100.

**Top right**  
Nikon 70-200mm lens at 200mm, F3.5 at 1/200 second, ISO 160

**Bottom Right**  
Nikon 70-200mm lens at 200mm. F5.6 at 1/250 second, ISO 400



# Inspiration

It is actually quite hard to find photographers who specialise in summer landscapes, but here are some of my favourites:

## Jo Stephen Photography

Jo's portfolio is packed with beautiful botanical work, much of it in an impressionistic style. She has a strong interest in rewilding and biodiversity conservation and her work explores her relationship with the landscape of North Dorset where she lives.

The images in her botanical portfolio I think really capture the essence of summer.

[jostephenphotography.wordpress.com](http://jostephenphotography.wordpress.com)

## LYS – AN INTIMATE JOURNEY TO THE NORTH A new book by Sandra Bartocha & Werner Bollmann

Sandra Bartocha is a professional photographer from Germany. I came across her work through the online magazine 'On Landscape' where you can watch her give a really interesting talk on Self expression, creativity and the essence of landscapes.

[www.onlandscape.co.uk/2018/12/sandra-bartocha](http://www.onlandscape.co.uk/2018/12/sandra-bartocha)

Werner Bollmann is a nature photographer, living in Kiel, northern Germany.

Together these two photographers have created LYS (which means light in Norwegian and Danish) a project exploring the north of Europe from the Danish woodlands and meadows to the frozen landscapes of Svalbard. The project which took four years to complete has now been made into a large format book and further information can be found at [www.lys-publishing.com](http://www.lys-publishing.com)

## Emily Endean

Emily is a landscape photographer based in Dorset. She captures stunning landscape from across the country and has some lovely summer landscapes in her portfolio.

[www.emilyendeanphotography.co.uk/landscapes-1](http://www.emilyendeanphotography.co.uk/landscapes-1)

## June's summer challenge

Find a locality close by that is easy to get to and take a series of images using the same scene but photographed at different times of the day and in different lighting conditions. You will see from your results how much the quality of light and the time of day affect the mood and feel of your images.

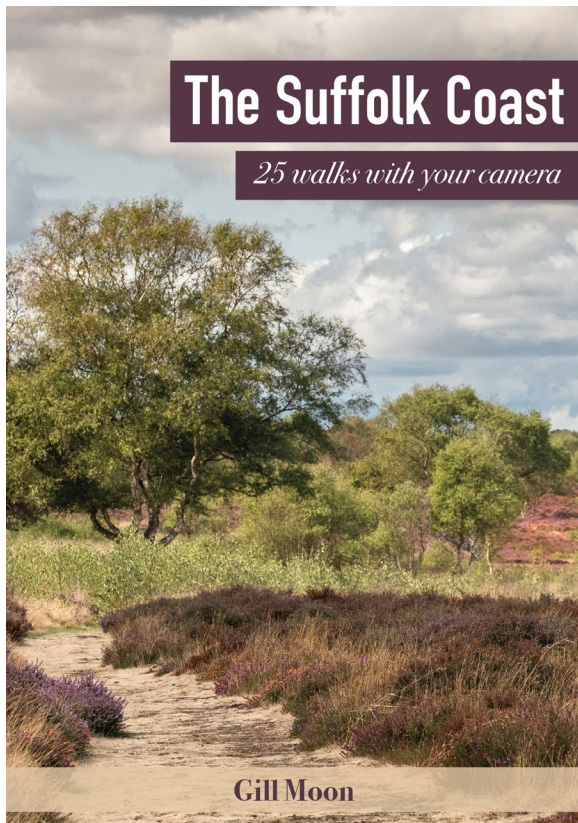
Shoot some summer flowers landscapes using a wide angle lens and a telephoto lens.

I am really happy to offer feedback and would love to see your images so please get in touch [gill@gillmoon.com](mailto:gill@gillmoon.com)





# Walking with your camera



### Shingle Street

**At a Glance**  
**Walk Type:** Coast and beach path  
**Starting Point:** Paving area adjacent to the Coastguard Cottages (PT3 395)  
**Grid Ref:** TM684515  
**Walk Distance:** Approx 3 miles

The map shows a route starting from a car park, walking along the beach, crossing the river, and following the coast through the shingle area. Key points are marked with red dots and numbered 1 through 7.

- ### Route Directions
1. From the car park walk up the concrete ramp to the beach and turn right. Walk along the shingle bank on the seaward side of the cottage. Continue almost to the end of the dwellings.
  2. Just before the martello tower turn right onto a track in the gap between two cottages.
  3. Cross the road and turn left then right at the footpath sign. Follow this path past an allotment on the right and out through the trees onto a raised grassy bank.
  4. Continue until the path forks, take the right fork.
  5. Continue along this path following the river wall across Oley Marsh.
  6. At the road take the footpath directly opposite and follow the river wall along the edge of Barthorpe Creek.
  7. At the beach turn right and follow the path along the sea wall all the way back to the car park.

### Focus Points

**Shingle Street**  
The little hamlet of Shingle Street, nestled in the cove of Holdeley Bay, just below the entrance to the River Ore. The single row of buildings, all built in 1743, is a testament to the resilience of the people who made their living working these waters. During the Second World War all the houses here were evacuated and the residents began to circulate about a German invasion. There were stories of an invading fleet of German ships picked up on RABBIT and sunk and the sea was bright with burning oil. These stories continued until the release of Government papers in 1993 which revealed what really happened here during the war.

The evacuation of Shingle Street was ordered on 22nd June 1940; the residents given only 5 days to leave their homes. A network of coastal defences was set up and the shoreline mined against an invasion which never came. In 1943 the Chemical Defence Research Establishment at Porton Down were looking for somewhere to test a new device and were offered Shingle Street. On 23rd March 1943 a 250lb bomb was dropped and scored a direct hit on the lifeboat inn which was completely destroyed. Local residents later commented that the area had been 'blown to bits', with nothing left but 'deep ponds between the houses and the sea'.

Shingle Street never regained its status as a working fishing village, despite residents being allowed to return home. Today the area is a holiday destination and site of Special Scientific Interest.

- ### Photo Scavenger Hunt
- Use the list below to guide your observation and creativity. Make an image for each word. Try to be as creative as possible with both your interpretation and composition. I have listed some ideas to get you thinking but don't let them restrict your imagination.
1. **Wild**  
Capture the wild nature of the area.
  2. **White**  
Coastguard cottages, the shell line, or the flowers of sea hails. Just a few white things to be found here.
  3. **Shingle in the landscape**  
Come at low tide and take advantage of the amazing shapes created from the exposed shingle.
  4. **On the beach**  
This could be a boat, an old wreck, flowers or just the patterns of the shingle.
  5. **Flowers**  
Shingle Street is renowned for its flowering plants. Use them as a foreground to a wider scene or in a more intimate close up.
  6. **Patterns**  
There are all around in the widest scene or the most intimate close up.
  7. **Medlow**  
This could be movement in the water or the wind blowing the grasses or the flags by the cottages.
  8. **Texture**  
Think about plants, the beach, grasses or elements like driftwood.
  9. **Man made**  
In the wild space there are still plenty of man made elements.
  10. **Contrasts**  
Eg natural / manmade, hard / soft, rough / smooth, dark / light.



My new book "The Suffolk Coast, 25 walks with your camera" has just gone to the printers and will be available to purchase from the beginning of July.

The project which comprises the book and a series of free photography walks around the Suffolk Coast has been undertaken with funding from the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) via their Sustainable Development Fund and Amenity & Accessibility Fund. It is hoped that the walks will take place from July in small groups of 5 to comply with current social distancing guidelines.

The walking book consists of 25 walks ranging in length from 2 to 6 miles and cover some of the most beautiful parts of the Suffolk Coast. Each walk comes with route directions, a map, route notes, local information and a photography scavenger hunt for each location. The walks can be undertaken with any camera from a phone camera to a DSLR and are all about observation and connecting with your surroundings.

Pre Orders are now available from my website  
[www.gillmoon.com/product/the-suffolk-coast-25-walks-with-your-camera](http://www.gillmoon.com/product/the-suffolk-coast-25-walks-with-your-camera)

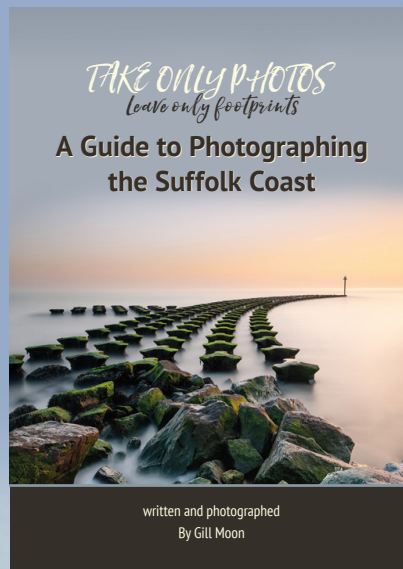
For more information about the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) please see their website [www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org](http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org)

# Suffolk Guides

## from Gill Moon Photography

£8

Pre order £6



These Guides have been produced with funding from the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) via their Sustainable Development Fund and Amenity & Accessibility Fund

