



LEFT, AND ABOVE: Andrew Harvard set about taking his Beverly Hills photos before sunrise and took several shots.

Nothing hurried for Harvard

How one man has turned his hobby into a passion, in which time is of the essence in getting the shot

DUNCAN GUY

PHOTOGRAPHY is like meditation. That's how relaxing Andrew Harvard finds his passion, which he goes to great lengths to pursue.

Although he earns his living as an insurance assessor, three years into his hobby he has a picture used by uMhlanga's Beverly Hills Hotel to his name and has been invited to speak at camera clubs.

Any weekend sees him clicking away on beaches between eMdloti and Winkelspruit, alone.

"I like to shoot alone. I have left the pack," he said, referring to the groups he would join when he first took up photography.

"It's nice to be in a pack but there's always a leader who, knowingly or not knowing, dictates when and what everybody will shoot.

"Shooting in a pack is good for a while but not ideal. You don't tend to grow. If by yourself you'll look for ideas and are forced to grow."

Harvard's level of photography is "not just a click".

"It gets quite involved with say HDR (high dynamic range) photography. You must take between three and nine photos of the exact scene straight after each other and sometimes at different times," he explained.

Then it's a process of combining the different exposures.

"You need to constantly work on it.

Every day. You need to do tutorials."

When work sends Harvard to the Eastern Cape, his hope of taking a perfect sunrise picture drives him to leave Durban at 3am to be able to have his camera in place to catch daybreak at Port Shepstone, around 4.50am, depending on the time of year.

"I also prefer to go down to Port St John's than stay in Mthatha," he said, describing the coastal town as a photographic paradise.

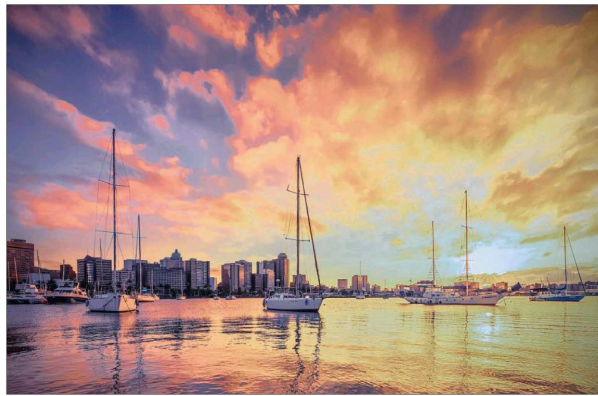
"You can get so zoned in on what you are doing, you don't notice what's going on around you. Suddenly on rare occasions, I feel an amazing sense of gratitude. I just clasp my hands and pray in gratitude (give thanks)."

He said critics at camera club talks, and others, had said some of his pictures contain too much orange. "I tried to make it less orange, then decided, no, that's not for me. I say: do what you enjoy."

When Harvard set about taking his Beverly Hills photo, he arrived there before sunrise and took several seascapes. "I pushed off 320 photos. At every spot I stood to get six different photos."

Eventually, he decided to photograph the reflection of umbrellas on to the pool. "I held the camera out over the water, about 10cm above the water. 15 minutes to half an hour after sunrise."

● Photos available printed on canvas, e-mail: awharvard@gmail.com



Yachts at the yacht mole in the Durban harbour.



CLASSIC: uMhlanga's iconic lighthouse is at one of Andrew Harvard's favourite photographic spots.



ABOVE: Durban's skyline reflects on to the water in Durban Bay.

RIGHT: Andrew Harvard in action.

PICTURE: HENRY STARBUCK



Andrew Harvard, left, talks to a member of Durban's wave riding community.

PICTURE: PRAKASH BIKHA



Rocks and surf make Winkelspruit a picturesque place.

PICTURES: ANDREW HARVARD

KZN wetland park students get awards for excellence

STAFF REPORTER

TWO iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority students have excelled in their fields.

Themba Mthembu, a tour guide and birding specialist, and Simangele Msweli, who is studying for a Masters of Science in biology (specialising in pollination) have received skills development through the World Heritage Site's programmes and are making a name for themselves, Mthembu in tourism, and Msweli in academic circles.

Isimangaliso has a commitment to benefit and improve the lives of the people surrounding the World Heritage Site, the majority of whom are land claimants of the 332 000ha park, a spokesman said.

The authority is involved in training in entrepreneurship, small business development, arts, crafts and tourism, and also provides bursaries and strong academic support to recipients.

"It's extremely gratifying when those who have received skills development and make their mark on the world in their chosen field," said Bronwyn James, senior manager for development and planning.

Mthembu has just been named KZN's best tourist guide, in the provincial Lillizela Tourism Awards in Durban and will go through to the national finals in Johannesburg next month.

The Lillizela awards are the country's tourism honours.

Mthembu, who attended the SA Wildlife College, the Nature College in Nelspruit and studied through BirdLife SA, worked as a freelance tour guide before starting his business "ZuluBirding and Ecotours" in 2008. It is one of the few black-owned tourism businesses in the area. He is mainly based in St Lucia.

He joined iSimangaliso's rural enterprise programme in 2012, receiving training in financial management, business strategy, marketing and sales. It also provided him with a laptop, camera and binoculars. Mthembu's bird list is 700.

His interest in birding and conservation was sparked when he was invited to join students at Phinda's training centre. He eventually became aware of the challenges of working in a geographical area where there was little understanding of conservation.

Realising the need to educate communities, particularly in some of the country's most important birding areas where species are verging on extinction, he has given talks, held community meetings and taken school pupils on trips into protected areas, educating them at his own expense.

"He has made inroads, for example, persuading communities to avoid frequent burning of the breeding grounds of the rare rose-throated long claw which is now flourishing."

Msweli, from the Mlekayi area in Mtubatuba, is one of 67 students to have had access to



BRILLIANT: Simangele Msweli.



EXCEPTIONAL: Themba Mthembu.

tertiary education and was part of iSimangaliso's higher education access programme from 2011 to 2013.

She studied at the University of KZN and because of her excellent results, received further funding to continue with her honours degree in biological sciences, achieving it *cum laude* and receiving several awards for merit.

After receiving a Golden Key international travel grant this year, she travelled to Australia to attend the summit for Golden Key, a society of students in the top 15 academically at university, where she presented her academic work.

She is also the UKZN 2015 bursar for the Abe Bailey Travel bursary, awarded to people who are academically strong and have shown exceptional qualities of leadership and service, with a good track record on campus, and in a wider social context and who are able to function as part of a select and highly-skilled group.

As a result, she will be going on an all-expenses paid educational tour of London next month. "The park is like a parent to me. It is iSimangaliso that mentored and invested the love of nature in me," she said.

As well as helping with her university financial needs and work-based experience, iSimangaliso financed her first international trip, to India, in 2012.

"Due to iSimangaliso's social, emotional and financial support, I managed to get good marks in my final year and it opened doors for me," she said. She plans to follow up with a PhD and a career in research, linking her studies with finding solutions to conservation challenges.

"I am busy with academics but doing community service on the side and working to support my livelihood."

Homeless man rescues swimmer

A HOMELESS man risked his life yesterday when he witnessed what could have been a drowning, said paramedics at ER24.

The patient, a 37-year-old man, and his rescuer were treated by metro services and then paramedics at Cape Town's Bantry Bay beach.

It is understood the homeless man – whose identity is not known – saw the man struggling in the water. He ran into the surf, dived in and pulled the man to safety – ANA

Spokesman Robert McKenzie said the she and her colleague had been on

Paramedic dies in collision

A PROVINCIAL emergency services paramedic died yesterday when an ambulance she was driving collided with a truck on the R612 between Exopo and Donnybrook in KwaZulu-Natal.

Spokesman Robert McKenzie said the she and her colleague had been on their way to attend to a child suffering from diarrhoea when the accident occurred.

"She died at the scene. Her colleague, a Mr Shelembe, a basic life support paramedic, has head injuries and is recovering in hospital." – ANA



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