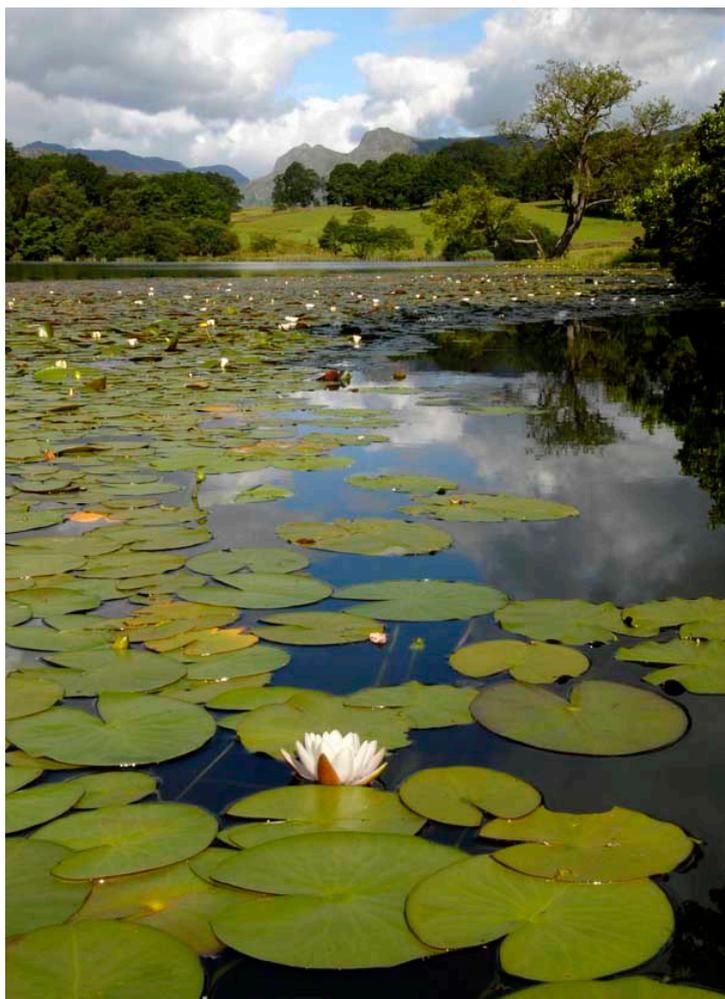


## Loughrigg Tarn

July and August aren't my favourite months in the Lake District. The earlier fresh and variegated greens of spring have darkened and become dull, and the uniform green of the bracken does nothing to perk up the uniformity of the high summer colour palette. However the colourful abundance of wild flowers is some compensation, and each year I fall in love once again with the sight of lily filled tarns. I always associate the flowering of water lilies with that last little bit of peace before the schools unleash the kids for the summer holidays.

I could have chosen from dozens of possible tarns, but Loughrigg Tarn has always been my favourite. On the morning of my Masterclass deadline it was so quintessentially a perfect Lakeland scene that I half expected to find Beatrix Potter painting Jeremy Fisher paddling across the tarn on his lily pad and Jemima Puddleduck still looking for a spot to lay her eggs.

I like lilies photographed as the foreground to a landscape, and you can't rely on handy ones being conveniently by the shore. So I went fully prepared for wading, with an ancient tripod, equally ancient trainers (I'm a wimp when it comes to going in barefoot), the oldest of my camera bodies and kept my fingers firmly crossed that the insurance company would be considerate if I fell in. As it was, I did need to wade out quite a distance, but the water was wonderfully warm and it fortunately still being early there was no-one around to witness my slight state of undress (just don't ask!).



Using my ancient Slik 88 tripod (which actually I think I prefer to my fancier recent Manfrottos) I set my Nikon D200 using aperture priority to  $f/22$ , to ensure that the foreground lily and the Langdales in the background were both as fully sharp and in focus as possible. I used my 17-55mm zoom lens and focussed just short of the Langdales. Quite a long time was spent subsequently on the computer using Photoshop to darken the lily, otherwise the white detail would have been lost when I lightened the rest of the shot.



Taken on the way to Loughrigg Tarn. I cheated a bit on this to save time and just propped my camera on the handy gate. The light is nice, but it's probably not a sharp enough photo to make into a big enlargement. I spot metered – standard overall metering resulted in underexposure, often a problem with photos taken against the light



I upped my ISO from 100ASA to 200 and set my aperture to  $f10$ , with the resulting speed of  $100^{\text{th}}$  sec. The geese obligingly swam into position against this dark background.