



'Manu' Holden, Nature Photographer.

Manu: And love of nature came first, because when I was very young, so a little years ago, my uncle give me some newspaper about the nature. It's called "La Hulotte" in French, and I learned to read in this newspaper and the far west was across the street -- you -- I take my "Hulotte", my newspaper, under the arm and go into the forest to discover all the thing and ten years after, I take the camera of my father and take photo -- a very bad photo, but it was the first.

Rob: And since then, you've been taking lots of pictures.

Manu: Yes.

Rob: Your newspaper article in Le Poher newspaper every week, there's one of your photographs.

Manu: The most I can do: yes. But when I speak, for example, speak about ... I don't know, if I speak about Trump, because Trump is very bad for the nature, for example, I don't have a photography of Trump, because I don't photography monkeys -- for the moment, of course. It's bad for monkeys, you know. But when I can, I take my photographies, of course, yes.

Rob: Do you use special equipment? Because, I think maybe people listening to us are perhaps curious to do this. Is it a very complicated?

Manu: Yes, but I work for it -- with the newspaper, for example, pour "Hebdo" or the money that I earn with Poher Hebdo is to pay my expense. And, for example, I have a reflex, you know it's a camera that you can change the lens. I have a lens for the macrophotography, because I love it. It's very easy to take macrophotography. You can take macrophotography in your garden if you don't spend a lot of time in your garden. You can find butterflies, dragonflies or a lot of beetles. That is very beautiful with a good light, of course.

Rob: You must also be very patient, I imagine. How long does it take you some times to take a photograph?

Manu: Oh, sometimes one day or ...

Rob: ... you're waiting all day?

Manu: Not for the insect. I don't have to wait, because you must search the insect and photography it. Most of the time the insect go away, and so you must follow it, and try to capture it with your camera. But when I take photo of birds in photography or mammals in photography, I must sometimes waiting -- I don't know what is the English term to say it. We call it "affût"; we make a affût --

Rob: -- a "hide" --

Manu: "Hide", yes, it's a good term, "hide", yes. We make hide and waiting for the mammals or the birds. So, of course when you make photography from a hide, you don't go nowhere; you must know the



habits of the animals to capture it in your camera. And so, you must be patient, effectively, because you can wait sometimes four or more hours. But, I can take my camera and go in the nature and try to approach the animals, too. It's very exciting, because you must be good -- no noise, no smell, nothing who can scare the animals. So, I don't wash me during one month -- no, I pleasant -- but you must take care about your smell.

Rob: It's something that maybe most photographers don't think about ..

Manu: Yes.

Rob: ... but you have to be prepared in that way ...

Manu: Yeah.

Rob: ... not just equipment, but also your own odour, your own smell.

Manu: Yeah, and don't make noise so you must take care about you, where you put your kit, but it's very exciting. For example to approach roe deer in some grassland, you can approach it very, very quietly, and you can be very, very close to him.

Rob: And you spoke about having a macro lens for coming very close to insects, but you also have to carry great big, long lens ...

Manu: Yes, big lens, big lens. I have 500 mm big lens, so it's like the photographer who photographs the footballer. You know, it's big one, it's very heavy. When you have to work in the nature, so, this big lens, I take it only for a hide.

Rob: When you stay in one place?

Manu: Yes, because I begin to be very hurt, you know, and it's very -- more and more difficult. So, I have a little one: 100 to 400 mm, with very light and -- to approach the animals and very good.

Rob: When you're taking photographs, are you able to have just one shot or do you take twenty pictures or 40 pictures to get just one success?

Manu: No, I prefer to be sure that one is good, so I take care about my choice. Because, when you let your finger on the shooter, you have a lot of photographs, but you spend a lot of time behind your computer to try to save one. So, I prefer to have one good, but perhaps just one, but good.

Rob: Is Brittany a good place for nature photography?

Manu: Yes, it's not the better place, but you can find in France, because a lot of agriculture, which is not good for the nature, a lot of hunting, which is not good for the tranquility of the animals, so there can be very easy scare about you. I think that's better place in France, for example, in the mountains, or in Europe. For me, the paradise for the photographie of nature is in Scotland. It's very easy to take pictures

of nature in Scotland, because animals are not afraid about you, because there's a lot of animals, like deers, like seals, like sea birds, like a lot of things you can photographie, like dolphins, like whales, like ...

Rob: You have photographed all these?

Manu: Yes, yes. Six years I spent five weeks in Scotland. It was a paradise. It was a dream for me.

Rob: How about some tips for people who might be interested in taking up nature photography. What would you advise amateurs?

Manu: To have ethic -- ethic comportment -- comportement éthique -- ethical comportment.

Rob: Ethical behaviour. Wow. Tell me what that means, for you.

Manu: For example, yes, not to disturb animals and essentially during the reproduction season, not to photographie animals on the nest, for example, it's very disturbing for them. Not to photographie dead animals, because some people do this. To have, every time, the idea that you can disturb the animals, so be sure you don't disturb animals. And, very often, they give him back. If you don't disturb the animals, they will show you the best profiles, the best picture of him.

Rob: OK, that's brilliant. And in terms of the behaviour, how about for things like equipment?

Manu: If you want to make beautiful photos, have good equipment. It's important, of course. But not enough. You can have good pen, you don't write well. But, if you want to make natural photographs, you need to have a reflex, I think. Perhaps a little reflex, the camera doesn't matter a lot. But, the lens is very, very important. The lens that you can do macro photographies, for example, are animals like mammals, or birds, you can choose, and you can grow your equipment. You can have more and more equipment, with your money, of course.

Rob: Manu, Emmanuel Holder, thank you very much for talking with us about your passion,

Manu: Thank you.

Rob: And I'll hope that you're going to inspire some of our listeners to try animal photography themselves.

Manu: Yes, I hope too.