

#SNAPSHOT

## Shooting Spring Flowers

Once you go out there with your camera and really focus on these little flowers, you will suddenly get addicted.



We all love spring. Little flowers pop up everywhere - in your garden, in nature, in parks, next to the roads: basically everywhere. And these flowers are great fun to photograph. You can also play with the background by simply moving your camera a little bit to the left or to the right. The background will then completely change. You can spend a long time photographing just one flower and keep moving your camera just a little bit, just to get that perfect angle.

Often, you just overlook those tiny flowers. But if you get up close, suddenly you're in a whole new world. Trust us, people will look weird at you when you're lying down next to the road in the grass with your camera, but that's fine.

Here are a bunch of tips on how to get started photographing spring flowers around you. **Look Around** This may sound super obvious, but as we mentioned before, you often overlook all the little flowers around you. The tiniest little flowers can look the best in your camera. So really take your time and look for those flowers. They're really everywhere. But if you want a quiet environment, just go to a nearby park and look around there.

Choice of Camera and Lens

Ok, nowadays even smartphones can take great close-up photos. If you are going to use your smartphone, we recommend buying "macro adapter." This will allow you to focus up close and you'll be able to take beautiful close-up shots of flowers. Otherwise, we recommend a "professional" camera with a "fast lens". Your best choice will be a dedicated macro lens. Most of the shots in this article were taken with my 50mm f/2.8 macro lens. Or, like with a smartphone, there are macro rings available that let you focus up close with standard lenses.

Get Low

Yes, you will want to be at the same height as the flower. You don't want to be pointing downwards, so you have to get on your knees, or even lower. Bring a blanket so you can be comfortable. The reason why you want to be very low is that you'll then get a lot of depth in your photo. The background will go on in the distance, creating this beautiful blurry effect.

The Background

And this brings us to the next topic: Background. When we are shooting these tiny flowers, the background is one of the most important aspects. You'll want to have a 'clean'

background that does not distract from the subject. You can also play with the background by simply moving your camera a little bit to the left or to the right. The background will then completely change. You can spend a long time photographing just one flower and keep moving your camera just a little bit, just to get that perfect angle.

Right Light and Angle

Even the most 'boring' little flower can really come to life with beautiful light in the background. Try out different little flowers that seem just normal when you look at them. You'll be surprised how beautiful some of these look through your camera. Even simple leaves can look amazing. Yes, this gets addicting.

Get Further, or Super Close

Photograph a flower in its environment. Use layers in the foreground to create depth in your image. This can be grass, a branch, another flower in the foreground, etc. Or do the opposite: Get super close to the flower and focus on its details. This is only possible with a macro lens. Focus on the pistils, or simply the shapes and colours.

Go Out Early Morning

In spring the mornings can be humid. If you go out early morning, you can catch the golden light. But often, the grass and little flowers are covered in little dew drops. This can give an extra magical effect to your photos. If you wanna cheat: you can also bring a little perfume bottle and fill it with water and spray the flowers yourself. This can create a similar effect.

Creative Angles

We mentioned getting low and photographing the flowers from a low angle. This works great. But if you want to get creative, try a top-down view from interesting patterns of flowers. Or reflections in water. You'll get some completely different results, which a great fun to try.

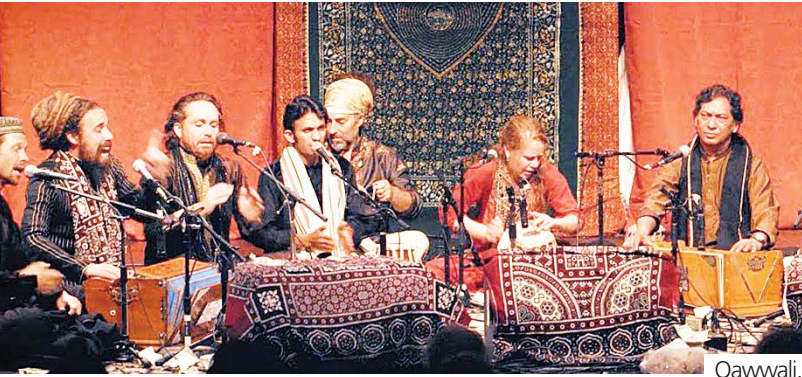
Shoot Handheld

Lots of people will tell you otherwise, but by shooting handheld you'll be able to be very precise in your composition. Also: You'll often be able to shoot from closer to the ground. With a tripod that's difficult. Try to shoot handheld and often almost widen open (lowest f-stop number) to get that super dreamy look.



Coming to India in 1943, he joined the Maratha Light Infantry and was soon engaged on the Eastern Front of World War II, where the British Indian Army was fighting the Japanese. He also served in Italy and Japan. Major Taylor would go looking for old haunts, like the Pande Hut and other 1857 landmarks on the Ridge, since he was a great expert on Indo-British history. His chronicles found a wide readership and he never stopped adding to his memoirs. The Flagstaff Tower, near the old Sabzi Mandi, was his focus of attention one full afternoon. After that it was Kingsway Camp and Kashmere Gate, where he spent a full day looking up Col Skinner's ruined house in Nicholson Road, and the St James Church.

# Saga of Olden-day Sahibs



Late RV Smith Subaltern Historian & raconteur

## #THOSE DAYS

Mr McLeod was an old-world sahib of Delhi and his friend in Agra (where he went every November to build the 'Altar of Repose' for Phulot-ki-Id) was Mr Webb. The latter fondly called him 'Langra Sahib' because of a permanent limp due to a war-time injury. But like him Mr Webb too was dressed in khaki shorts, half-sleeved shirt and stockings, with a sola-hat on his head. He walked passed Ghattia Azam Khan with a shopping bag on his way to Phulatti Bazar. Mr Webb used to live near the Neharwali kothi, so named because it was built on a stream that was part of the Delhi-Agra Canal. Later he shifted to the vicinity of the YWCA where existed Fantasia, a one-time abode of an Anglo-Indian official and writer J. F. Fanthome.

Emaciated Incarnation

Also cycling down from that area was a moustached Rajput Sardar, shirt tucked into breeches, wearing

Hines died, Mrs Hines, despite gossip, did not remarry but went away to England with Kenneth. Alexander too passed away but Webb's whereabouts became a mystery. He also must be dead now, unless he survives as a centenarian, still enjoying the Thursday qawwalis and going into mystic raptures. He was an institution in himself, a link with the past that is hard to break. In this connection one would also like to remember Major PJO Taylor, a handsome octogenarian who died in East Sussex.

"Who wants a wife when one is happy otherwise", remarked Webb with a sigh of relief when someone asked him about it. A contrast to him was Alexander Sahib, who used to come every Sunday to buy mince and groceries, cycling all the way from Saunth-ki-Mandi.

riding boots and a starched turban with a silver-headed cane under his armpit. Webb was quite fair; though sun-burnt, of medium build with an aquiline nose, light blue eyes and hair parted at the side as per the style of the 1930s. He was a confirmed bachelor and spoke Hindustani with ease. Butcher Barati and his son, Sharfu, were among his admirers, though they confessed that he was an eccentric sahib who frequented the shrine of Shah Abul Ullah on Thursdays after most of the devotees had left. "Kya jalwa tha kal raat ko?" (What an aura there was last night), he would remark. Then would follow a discourse on Sufism. One day he appeared at the home of the Jacksons, with his brother Sydney who lived in some other town. The purpose was to fix a match for him. Things did not work out and Sydney went back to where he had come from to resume his bachelor existence. "Who wants a

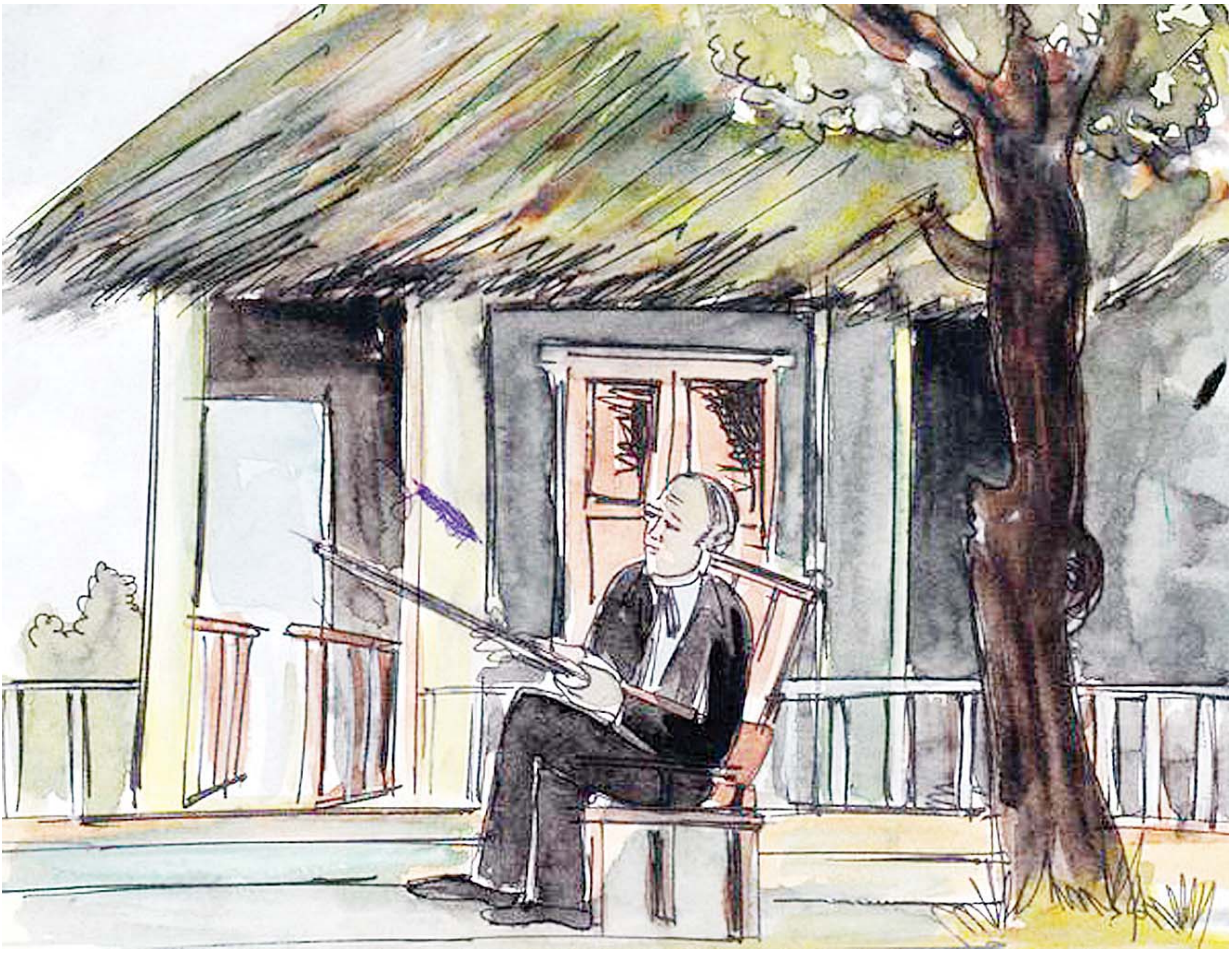


Sati-Chaura ghat.



## International Marconi Day

Amateur radios, point-to-point contacts, high-frequency wave transfers, a mysterious yet attractive prize for the most connected stations. ... All of this might just sound like the beginning of a quirky yet adorable movie. But don't be fooled! Named after a scientist who essentially changed the connectedness of the world as we know it, this is an important day that might be new to many but is actually a really fun day to learn about and also to celebrate!



good cook and continued to make tasty week-end dishes for his wife, son and their acquaintance, the hunter Cyril Thomas. They used to stay in the old house of the Michaels, the family to which Mrs Hines belonged. Hines died, Mrs Hines, despite gossip, did not remarry but went away to England with Kenneth. Alexander too passed away but Webb's whereabouts became a mystery. He also must be dead now, unless he survives as a centenarian, still enjoying the Thursday qawwalis and going into mystic raptures. But one misses the man. He was an institution in himself, a link with the past that is hard to break. In this connection one would also like to remember Major PJO Taylor, a handsome octogenarian who died in East Sussex on 22 Feb. 2006.

army officers.

## Taylor's Sympathies

In Kanpur and Lucknow too the sites excited his interest. He would visit the scenes of 1857 events - the Sati-Chaura ghat, the Residency and the well which carried the controversial inscription: "Sacred to the memory of British officers and men, and a large number of Christian women and children who were massacred here by the orders of one Nana Sahib of Betoora."

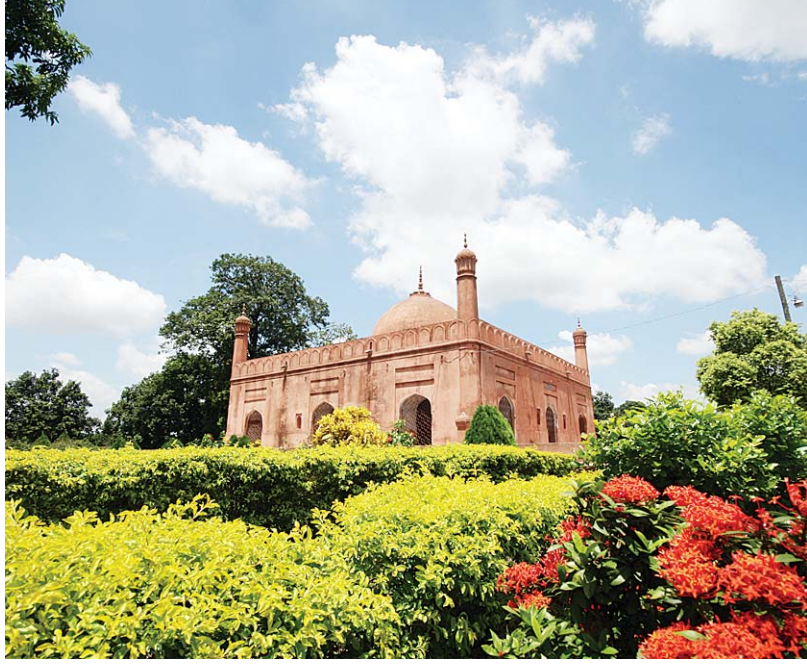
Taylor's sympathies however were not confined to his own kind. He was equally agonized by the atrocities perpetrated by the Company Sarkar after the Great Revolt was crushed. He regretted

the slaughter of innocent white women and children just as much as he deplored the cruel deaths of Indian men, women (some of them pregnant) and children who were impaled on spears and swords. Taylor would go back to England and follow up his findings with material available in the India British Library, where he used to spend most of his time, and where he found information on such diverse topics as the hanging of the Nawab of Ferozapore, Shamsuddin Khan, an alleged complicity in the murder of William Fraser, the British Resident, in 1835, and Mirza Ghalib's love for gambling and a dark courtesan of Chawri Bazar.

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Delhi-Agra Canal.



The Shrine of Shah Abul Ullah.

#QUOTES

## Celebrate Earth Day

Even small actions can have a big impact on saving the planet.



Earth Day is celebrated annually on April 22nd to emphasise the need to protect the environment. With global warming, pollution, and deforestation on the rise, protecting our environment is more important than ever. Even small actions can have a big impact on saving the planet.

Here are some inspiring Earth Day quotes to motivate you to take action and save the planet this Earth Day and beyond.

"The environment is where we all meet; where we have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share." - Lady Bird Johnson

The quote by Lady Bird Johnson emphasizes the importance of the environment as a shared resource. In order to keep it healthy for future generations, we must all work together to protect it.

"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it." - Robert Swan

We all play a role in protecting the planet, as Robert Swan reminds us in this quote. No one is going to take action for us if we don't take action ourselves. Each of us has a responsibility to make a difference.

"We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children." - Native American Proverb

Our actions have an intergenerational impact. It is our responsibility to protect the Earth and ensure that future generations can live on it in a healthy and sustainable manner.

"The Earth is a fine place and worth fighting for." - Ernest Hemingway

This quote by Ernest Hemingway reminds us of the beauty of the Earth and the importance of protecting it.

"The Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed." - Mahatma Gandhi

It is important to find a balance between our needs and wants, according to this quote by Mahatma Gandhi. According to him, the Earth can provide for everyone's basic needs, but greed and excess lead to scarcity and inequality. A simple and sustainable lifestyle is what we should all strive for.



#DISCOVERY

## The Mysterious Underground City

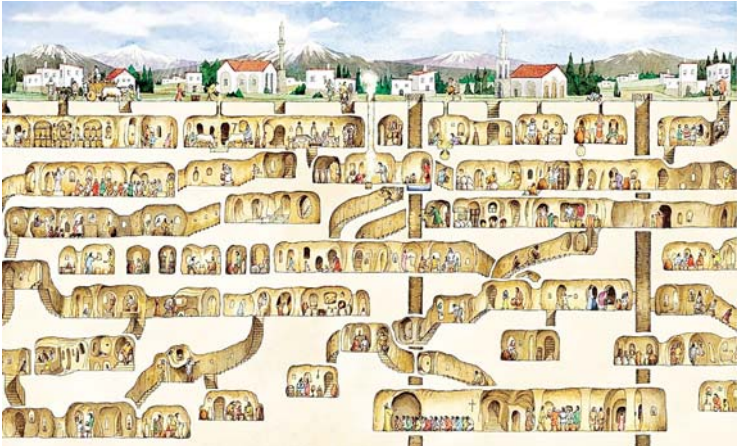


We live cheek by jowl with undiscovered worlds. Sometimes the barriers that separate us are thick, sometimes they're thin, and sometimes they're breached. That's when a wardrobe turns into a portal to Narnia, a rabbit hole leads to Wonderland, and a Raquel Welch poster is all that separates a prison cell from the tunnel to freedom.

## A Fateful Swing of the Hammer

Those are all fictional examples. But in 1963, that barrier was breached for real. Taking a sledgehammer to a wall in his basement, a man in the Turkish town of Derinkuyu got more home improvement than he bargained for. Behind the wall, he found a tunnel. And that led to more tunnels, eventually connecting a multitude of halls and chambers. It was a huge underground complex, abandoned by its inhabitants and undiscovered until that fateful swing of the hammer.

The anonymous Turk had found a vast subterranean city, up to 10 stories and 200 feet (76 meters) deep and large enough to house 20,000 people. Who built it, and why? When was it abandoned, and by whom? History and geology provide some answers.



## Fantastically Craggy Cappadocia

Geology first. Derinkuyu is located in Cappadocia, a region in the Turkish heartland famed for the fantastic craginess of its landscape, which is dotted with so-called fairy chimneys. Those tall stone towers are the result of the erosion of a rock type known as tuff. Created out of volcanic ash and covering much of the region, that stone, despite its name, is not so tough.

Taking a cue from the wind and rain, the locals for millennia have dug their own holes in the soft stone for underground dwellings, storage rooms, temples, and refuges. Cappadocia numbers hundreds of subterranean dwellings, with about 40 consisting of at least two levels. None is as large, or by now as famous, as Derinkuyu.

## Hittites, Phrygians, or Early Christians?

The historical record has little definitive to say about Derinkuyu's origins. Some archaeologists speculate that the oldest part of the complex could have been dug about 2000 B.C. by the Hittites, the people who dominated the region at that time, or

else the Phrygians, around 700 B.C. Others claim that local Christians built the city in the first centuries A.D.

Whoever they were, they had great skill: The soft rock makes tunnelling relatively easy, but cave-ins are a big risk. Hence, there is a need for large support pillars. None of the floors at Derinkuyu have ever collapsed.

Two things about the underground complex are more certain. First, the main purpose of the monumental effort must have been to hide from enemy armies-hence, for example, the rolling stones used to close the city from the outside.

## If Buckets Could Speak

Some shafts went much deeper and doubled as wells. Even as the underground city lay undiscovered, the local Turkish population of Derinkuyu used these to get their water, not knowing the hidden world their buckets passed through. Incidentally, derinkuyu is Turkish for "deep well."

Another theory says the underground city served as a temperate refuge for the region's extreme seasons. Cappadocian winters can get very cold, the summers extremely hot. Below ground, the ambient temperature is constant and moderate. As a bonus, it is easier to store and keep harvest yields away from moisture and thieves.

Whatever the relevance of its other functions, the underground city was much in use as a refuge for the local population during the wars between the Byzantines and the Arabs; during the Mongol raids in the 14th century; and after the region was conquered by the Ottoman Turks.

## Leaving the "Soft" Place

A visiting Cambridge linguist visiting the area in the early 20th century attests that the local Greek population still reflexively sought shelter in the underground city when news of massacres elsewhere reached them. Derinkuyu is now one of Cappadocia's biggest tourist attractions, so it no longer counts as an undiscovered world. But perhaps there's one on the other side of your basement wall. Now, where did you put that sledgehammer?



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

## BABY BLUES



## ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

## THE WALL

