

INSIGHT #1,

July 2011



Happy New Year everyone!

Yes, that is very delayed I know but I thought as a start I would wish everyone well for, well, the REST of 2011. We're half the way through already, can you believe it!? That means that we've all missed out on 6 possible 'INSIGHT' emails - so I'll have to write an extra long one to make up for it...

Ok, Ok, I've heard you groan at the thought, so I'll keep this one to a normal length :)

TO BEGIN WITH, I've given you some detail on the most exciting developments in my life in 2011.... then later I've given a brief insight into one highlight per month of my year so far.

LIFE AFTER UN-ZUD

My year, also known as my 'new life after NZ,' really began at Christmas time when I finally FINISHED my written Masters thesis. Last time you heard from me the

film was yet to premiere - well that happened in Dunedin on 19th November, and went really well, 500 people at the screening of our 6 Masters films - but afterwards there was still a huge mountain for me to climb. I spent a solid month in Dunedin in the library researching, then another 2-3 weeks back in Perth writing like crazy, until the 20 000 words were all but polished. I then sent the whole thing into cyberspace, and amazingly it ended up at the Otago print shop where my good friend Carla (Hola mi Amiga!) collected the hard copy and handed it in for me. YAAAAAY! Needless to say it felt surreal to have it done and dusted. It seems funny now to skim over this in a few sentences, but at the time it was a real mission to complete. Each day I got up at 6-7am, walked to the kitchen like a zombie and sat at the computer typing all day. Even the day after I'd handed it in, instinct took over and I found myself at the screen again. HANG ON, I thought. It's DONE! You don't NEED to do THIS anymore! Such relief.

I've since had the news that I've PASSED (yay!), but I am in need of addressing some questions the examiners raised and resubmitting my final thesis before I can graduate. So that basically means I don't have to return to that Godforsaken foreign country (where they speak a weird and incomprehensible lingo) EVER AGAIN! Ha ha ha! - you know that I'm joking and I really loved the place ;-)

With New Zealand behind me and the thesis handed in, it was time to catch up with some things back in good ol' Perth. You could say there were one or two things pending, but I jumped on with the first priority and began making a website. This took lots of fiddling with domain websites, sorting through photos and deciding on basic designs, but eventually I 'got it up' (the website, I mean!) and was pleased with the result. It now gives me the forum to post old and new blogs (eventually all these newsletters will be added), share recent photos and keep everyone updated with my photos, films and general adventures to inspire all about nature.

If you haven't already, check it out:
www.simoncherriman.com

While we're on the topic, I need to let you know about my

EAGLE PRESENTATION at NEARER TO NATURE, Mundaring.

Date: Saturday 16th July 2011

Chips the 13 year-old wedge-tailed eagle will be present (courtesy of David and Jenny Pettet, Raptor WA) as I give you lots of stories about raptors, eagle research and wildlife filmmaking. Come along for this informative and interactive eagle encounter!

More information is available here:

http://www.simoncherriman.com/Simon_Cherriman/Home.html - just click on the link on the homepage.

A WEDGED TALE shown to the people for which it was made...

The next priority for 2011 was to organise a screening of the film here in Perth. I did a fair bit of ringing up different venues, sending out emails and general planning, and after a big muck up with the venue I had initially booked, I found myself with a big smile after looking at the Alexander Library Theatre in Perth CBD. The screen was large... there were plenty of seats.... the stage was set...

The moment finally happened on 11th March... Looking back it seems like a short gap between the Dunedin Premiere and the Perth Premiere, but at the time it was drawn out and I just itched for the night to arrive. The nerves built as the Friday night drew nearer, and I even decided to become really civilized and wear some shoes (thanks Dad for the black lace-ups!). My wonderful parents and great friends Judy and Natalia came along to help with the setup and ticket sales, and suddenly I had shown the film. It went screamingly well, and the best way to sum it up is to show you the email I sent to Adam the next day:

"It happened last night in the most FABULOUS evening of my life! First I showed Kereru, then River Dog, then AWT, intertwined with an accompanying speech. The response was ENORMOUS! Incredible. The audience responded to AWT

SO much more than the Kiwis did at the Duffers show. Every little thing caused a laugh or a murmur - the Perth skyline shot, the tiny eaglet, EVERY mammal at the Dryandra night seen. EVERYONE LOVED THE DUCKLINGS, I was deafened by response. All the little 'Simmo' jokes hit the spot - the stomach, the roo's seatbelt, the Maiden shirts, my unique car aerial. It just felt so, so good to finally be showing it to the people I know."



SO...

NEW DVD COMING SOON...

"Now..." I hear you asking me, "...when is the new DVD available?" Well, I'm currently working on a 'making of' documentary about the film, which I plan to release on DVD with the final film. As soon as this package is ready, don't worry, you will find out via email, facebook, my website or the grapevine. But at the moment it will take me at least a few weeks to finalise this and get it all packaged. Currently you can view a brief trailer of this docco here:

http://www.simoncherriman.com/Simon_Cherriman/Films.html

OTHER NEWS IN SHORT:

- In January I spent a great Australia Day, and a few other subsequent day visits, at a favourite natural place in the Perth Hills: Lake Leschenaultia. I've been exploring this place since I was very young and it always offers amazing view of speccy scenes and wonderful wildlife. Here are some of my photos:
http://www.simoncherriman.com/Simon_Cherriman/Photo_Gallery/Pages/Lake_Leschenaultia.html
- The Blue Mountains took my breath away in February when I took off over east with my girlfriend Gill to visit her friends and family, and explore some amazing natural areas in NSW, Canberra and Victoria. For a look at the wildlife I encountered here and at some other beautiful places including Castlemaine, the Otways National Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, check this photo gallery:
http://www.simoncherriman.com/Simon_Cherriman/Photo_Gallery/Pages/Over_East_Feb_2011.html
- It was a quiet month in March which was mostly spent at home, but one thing I DID achieve was to make myself an 8 FOOT BED!! You might not believe this but I've been 6'8" for 10 years and that whole time I've slept with my feet hanging off the end! I built the bed out of demolition (native) jarrah & marri, with bedposts made from a fallen wandoo tree I removed from a firebreak several years ago. Now it finally feels like I'm sleeping in the trees!
- I climbed a low River Red Gum to reach and photograph my first Spotted Harrier nest which contained 4 eggs! This excitement occurred in April when I visited the Pilbara on a consulting job. Photos of the harrier and more wildlife are here:
http://www.simoncherriman.com/Simon_Cherriman/Photo_Gallery/Pages/Pilbara.html
- How can I not mention the AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHIC Scientific Expedition for May?? This was by far the highlight of that month and probably of the whole year. I was privileged enough to be able to spend 3 weeks on El Questro Station

doing research on local bird species and filming lots of native wildlife. For some information about the expedition and a few society photos check this link:

<http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/society/emma-gorge-scientific-expedition-2011.htm>

My photos of this adventure can be found here:

http://simoncherriman.com/Simon_Cherriman/Photo_Gallery/Pages/El_Questro.html

http://simoncherriman.com/Simon_Cherriman/Photo_Gallery/Pages/Parrys_Lagoon.html

- In **June** I spent a week in Sydney conducting motivational and educational talks to school children at a Video Conference Festival. This was a brilliant experience and it's always heartening to learn how switched on, intelligent and generally inquisitive some children are, and what their little minds take note of. Thanks to Pat, Steve and all at the Field of Mars Environmental Education Centre: check their site for more info:

<http://www.fieldofmar-e.schools.nsw.edu.au/>

I won't make this any longer as I'm keen to get it sent to reach you all before any MORE months pass by! I'd like to end by wishing you all the very best with WHATEVER you are doing at the moment. Even if you're flat out with your life I hope you are all finding time to take (even brief) note of what is happening in the natural world around you.

Remember, if we just open our eyes, "... we can all find that refreshment of spirit that only the wilds of nature can offer."

(The late Dr. Vincent Serventy)

Chao AMIGOS!

Best Wishes,

Simon

 **Save a tree, please don't print this e-mail unless necessary**

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