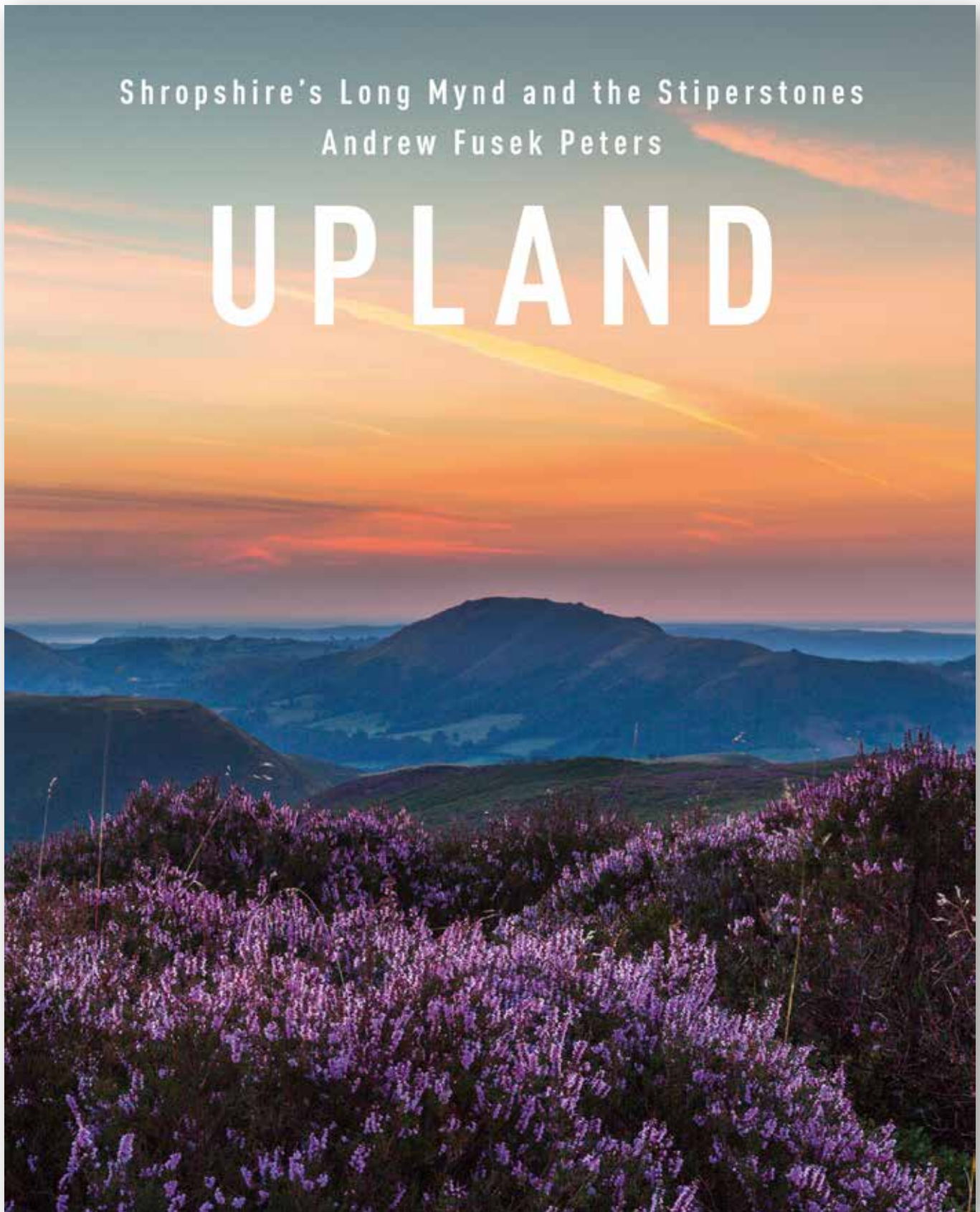


Upland by Andrew Fusek Peters

Publication June 2017. £20



Publisher: Graffeg Limited
24 Stradey Park Business Centre,
Llanelli SA14 8YP Wales, United Kingdom.
Tel: +44 (0)1554 824000 sales@graffeg.com
www.graffeg.com

Sales: Signature
Tel: +44 (0)845 862 1730 www.signaturebooksuk.com
Distribution: Combined Book Services
Tel: +44 (0)1892 837171 www.combook.co.uk
Wales: Welsh Books Council
Tel: +44 (0)1970 624455 www.gwales.com

GRAFFEG

Upland by Andrew Fusek Peters

Publication June 2017. £20

'The country that lies between the dimpled lands of England and the gaunt purple steeps of Wales, half in Faery, half out of it.' Mary Webb

Upland is an exploration of the wildlife and landscape of the Long Mynd and the Stiperstones, in stunning photography and lyrical nature writing by Andrew Fusek Peters, author of critically-acclaimed wild swimming memoir *Dip*.

Commissioned by the National Trust and Natural England for their major environmental project, Stepping Stones, Andrew found more than simply a catalogue of flora and fauna. Instead he delivers a vivid and poetic evocation of being in the landscape; of its capacity to move us, and the necessary efforts which must be made to preserve it.

Upland

- Author Andrew Fusek Peters
- Publication June 2017
- Paperback, 192 pages
- Size 250 x 200mm
- ISBN 9781910862681
- Price £20

All rights available except UK

Andrew Fusek Peters

Andrew Fusek Peters is an acclaimed and prolific author and photographer. He has been shortlisted twice for British Wildlife Photographer of the Year and his photographs regularly appear in the national papers and photo magazines. His supermoon was on the front of the **Times** and his 'hare in bluebells' was on **Springwatch**.

His last photobook *Wilderland* was highly praised.

'Stunning photos' **The Countryman**

'A delight' **Outdoor Photographer**

'Inspiring' **Amateur Photographer**.

Praise for *Dip*:

'A poetic book, the writing is so lyrical and full of metaphor... and there are moments when words and water fuse together.' **Independent**

'Among the current crop of British nature writers, he deserves a prominent place.'

Times Literary Supplement

www.andrewfusekpeters.com

Upland by Andrew Fusek Peters

Publication June 2017. £20



'The country that lies between the dimpled lands of England and the gaunt purple steeps of Wales – half in Faery and half out of it.' Mary Webb



Many years ago, I found myself one freezing February morning standing on top of the Long Mynd in the middle of scratchy, boggy heather wearing nothing but a pair of swimming trunks and leaning on an eight foot surf board.

This unbalancing levitation of a ridge had lifted me high enough to make out the silhouettes of far Hay Bull and the Welsh mountains to the west, while the plain of Shrewsbury and the distant promontory that is the Wrekin spread out behind. Rather closer, a cameraman kept shouting 'one more take, Andy!' as my goosebumps developed their own goosebumps and the crowd tried to stop giggling. The programme, called Heart of the

Country, liked my quirky presenting ways. So here I was, illustrating the fact that 560 million years ago, the Long Mynd was a sea and if you dig down, enormous trilobites are still to be found.

What I did not know then, was that twenty years later I would be exploring these uplands with a fresh eye and some warm clothes. Far from being a uniformity of brown and muted colours with a six-week-summer-splash of blooming purple heather, the Mynd and that other great raised quartzite ridge of the Stiperstones are bursting with flora and fauna through all the seasons. Throughout my adult life, I had seen these uplands as places to visit, walk through, clear one's mind. Yes, I had seen the



Publisher: Graffeg Limited
 24 Stradey Park Business Centre,
 Llanelli SA14 8YP Wales, United Kingdom.
 Tel:+44 (0)1554 824000 sales@graffeg.com
 www.graffeg.com

Sales: Signature
 Tel: +44 (0)845 862 1730 www.signaturebooksuk.com
Distribution: Combined Book Services
 Tel: +44 (0)1892 837171 www.combook.co.uk
Wales: Welsh Books Council
 Tel: +44 (0)1970 624455 www.gwales.com

GRAFFEG

Upland by Andrew Fusek Peters

Publication June 2017. £20



wild ponies that roamed the Myrd, plenty of crows and even the odd raven. But as for other inhabitants and the area they lived in, I was ignorant.

It took a phone call from Pete Carty, Countrywide Manager for the National Trust in South Shropshire, to change all that. He rang me two years ago, in December, and asked if I would be interested in a photographic commission. There was a new project called Stepping Stones, that was all about connecting up the Stiperstones, owned by Natural England, and the Long Myrd, in the custodianship of the National Trust. The subsequent photos of Upland began with this commission. I later interviewed Pete to ask him about Stepping Stones and why it is such a profoundly important environmental project.

This is what he said: 'As manager of the Long Myrd I and the team have been looking at changes in wildlife on the Myrd and seen a lot of declining wildlife despite our best efforts. We have linked up with Stiperstones National Nature Reserve and need to think about these two reserves as wildlife parks. What is clear from recent research is that a lot of wildlife lives in those places, but the wildlife in between is in decline and that decline is affecting the species on those two sites. We need to not just think about these nature reserves as islands, but view them in the wider landscape and try to restore wildlife populations over a much wider area by creating corridors and stepping stones across the landscape, so that species can move from one site to another. This is absolutely fundamental for those



populations to survive. Why is that? If you have your wildlife in a rather small island, it is easy for those populations to be extinguished by fire, famine, disease or a sudden change in land management. If those islands are a long way apart, it is less likely that those species will be able to re-colonise and cross areas where there is very little habitat. Ideally what we need is lots of islands, of smaller nature reserves with corridors like hedgerows, verges, meadows, woodland and stream banks connecting them. The Stepping Stones project is taking a long hard look at wildlife over a large area, collecting data on decline and disappearance of wildlife and coming up with plans to put as much habitat back as possible.'

Pages 10-11: After dusk, the sky above Manstone Rock is on fire.

Left: The male linnet shows off its colours against a backdrop of yellow gorse on the Stiperstones.

Right: The heath spotted-orchid is quite a find on a farm that edges the lower slopes of the Long Myrd.

Pages 16-17: Long Myrd at dawn in August when the heather is in bloom.

Introduction 15



Publisher: Graffeg Limited
24 Stradey Park Business Centre,
Llanelli SA14 8YP Wales, United Kingdom.
Tel: +44 (0)1554 824000 sales@graффeg.com
www.граффeg.com

Sales: Signature
Tel: +44 (0)845 862 1730 www.signaturebooksuk.com
Distribution: Combined Book Services
Tel: +44 (0)1892 837171 www.combook.co.uk
Wales: Welsh Books Council
Tel: +44 (0)1970 624455 www.gwales.com

GRAFFEG

Upland by Andrew Fusek Peters

Publication June 2017. £20



I then asked Peter why they had initially approached me for the commission:
 "The great thing about your pictures Andy, is that you have photographed the most beautiful bits, the wildest bits, the places where wildlife is at its best. We can use these images to say to people, look! More of the landscape should be like this or, this is what it used to look like, we can recreate this. So you have helped us visualize our aspiration in the future for wildlife on the Long Mynd and Stiperstones. At the beginning of Stepping Stones, we had a good concept ecologically but we did not have images that we could communicate. Data does not excite most people but stunning photographs can really grab them, take their breath away, stop them in their tracks, make them ask questions: where do I go and see that? Only on nature reserves, because it's very rare, because our own species has not been looking after wildlife as well

as we should be. Above all we have to avoid a point in the future where someone is standing on top of the Long Mynd or Stiperstones and says their forehead and says 'My god, we've lost it all, we've ruined it. There are no birds singing, I can see no flowers. We are coming up with Stepping Stones, now so that there can be more birds, more flowers, more like it used to be.'
 Pete's passion and concern for nature was a great motivator and the contract soon developed into an incredibly exciting discovery of the wonders on my own Shropshire doorstep. I had seen cheetahs on the hills in Kenya, tracked otters in Shetland and photographed white tailed eagles in Sweden. What about my own wild backyard? That night I drove up to the high heathland that covers the Mynd almost in a fever. The dusk was dim and the light terrible, but I had to take photos. As the sun dipped behind cloud, I had my first glimpse of

what Upland means to me. Far to the north west, the Wexin showed as a mere dimple. A lead tree burned in the half-light into the bones of some long dead fossil as the wire fell away, miles contained within a single frame.
 As the months went by, I quickly understood that I could only do this work with help and so I took whatever advice I could, sat in buggies, and took as Simon and Pete drove me on long tracks along the fiddles A-Z of these high hills. I found out that much wildlife is used to cars, and a slow vehicle becomes the perfect hide snaking wonderful close-up pictures of meadow poppy, skylark and whinchat. Fellow birders and photographers gave me tips, took the out and helped me to find wonders which had a different map, where time is the main geography – dawn and dusk the two cruises around which much animal activity resumes.

Page 18: When the heather is out, the Mynd is transformed. This female grouse feeding at dusk is easier to spot now.
Above left: The rare marsh violet is starting to make a good recovery at the Gutten on the Stiperstones.
Above right: In summer, a foxglove forest covers part of the western flank of the Mynd and is a favoured habitat for stonechats.
Pages 20-21: Dusk from above Lytham into Wales.



With work and patience, I came close enough to red grouse to touch, saw hobbies soaring over my head, whinchats posed in a blur of purple, ravens framed by heather and curlews fighting off buzzards. Rare marsh voles reclaimed old wooded stream banks, small pearl-bordered fritillaries hunted among thistles and the male stonechat sang his territory among a forest of foxgloves on the far western flanks of the Mynd. Here, then, everywhere, with effort, was colour for the finding, fixing and celebrating.
 Here then, is Upland and its craggy valleys revealing extraordinary gifts throughout the year, from dawn to dusk and beyond into another landscape of rising moors and star constellations. My pictures and stories are the best evidence I can put forward to show that Shropshire is one of the great borderland jewels and strongholds of ever-spreading species. This book is a call out to put our

country on the map, to celebrate a part of Britain that holds its own alongside the Scottish Highlands, the Peak District and the Lakes. What we hold dear in terms of landscape and wildlife has both national and international significance and Upland aims to showcase our fragile treasure.
Left: The hobby is a rare success story, possibly due to global warming and more availability of dragonflies. They are summer visitors and favour our uplands.
Above: A farming family have been telling me of their sightings of a very rare leucisic red kite over their land. After many visits, I finally catch this genetic anomaly in flight as a crow tries to attack it – a wonderful moment.
Pages 24-25: The bog pool next to Pale Cottage on the Long Mynd takes on an ethereal glow under a March full moon.

Publisher: Graffeg Limited
 24 Stradey Park Business Centre,
 Llanelli SA14 8YP Wales, United Kingdom.
 Tel:+44 (0)1554 824000 sales@graffeg.com
 www.graffeg.com

Sales: Signature
 Tel: +44 (0)845 862 1730 www.signaturebooksuk.com
Distribution: Combined Book Services
 Tel: +44 (0)1892 837171 www.combook.co.uk
Wales: Welsh Books Council
 Tel: +44 (0)1970 624455 www.gwales.com

GRAFFEG

Upland by Andrew Fusek Peters

Publication June 2017. £20



The absolute darkness of winter is the perfect disincentive to rising early. There is no hint of dawn at 5.30 am, just an instinct which tells me bed is the best place to explore, and that sleep is the only landscape worth travelling through.

But the itch is there, prodded into life by my weather app which promises the first lack of rain in ages. Winter has been one long downpour, drowning all wildlife sightings, good moods and distant horizons into a mush.

Frost has been forecast, and once I have grabbed my flask and kit, my breath is indeed visible and my lungs scorched by uncommon cold. I drive off through what is still night, only a hint of brightening to the west as I head through Bishopscastle and the Hope valley, then slowly climb up to Shelve and Penroby. We are lucky in Shropshire to still have roads that are not roads, old rocky tracks leading to remote cottages high on the slopes of the Spigerrones. They were once inhabited by people who worked in the lead mines, and were called 'squatters' cottages. If you could build one on the common land overnight and have smoke coming out of the chimney then you could live in it.

Pages 26-27: At the beginning of January, we make our way up the Worway in darkness and walk along Cow Ridge on the first snow of the year to catch the pre-dawn with the lights of Church Stretton winking like fireflies.

Left: A freezing dawn on the Devil's Chair.

Pages 30-31: Taken from just below the Spigerrones. The snow makes for difficult conditions but it is worth battling through a Shropshire blizzard to show the last and valleys all the way to the far Long Mynd.

The desperation of the mining community has faded. Now many of the cottages have returned to the earth as the pile of rocks they once were, while others are comfortably modernized and tucked into the side of the hill, filled with sleeping dreams as I rumble past.

Once I have left the tarmac, the adrenaline begins to kick in. My car grumbles about the bumpy line, tyres slipping on mud and frosty patches of ice. How sad, with global warming, that a patch of frozen track excites me. Finally, after many twists and turns and beyond the last habitation, a gate indicates the beginning of heathland. The great mass of The Devil's Chair rises up in a silhouette. By seven, the sky behind has already changed colour, winter darkness leaching away and the stars struggling to strut their stuff. What I can't tell is if it is sky or clouds that have blotted the stars. A cloudy start, and the light, like elusive wildlife, will be hankered down.

However, I have got this far. Time to head up the much narrower track that would throw my car into an exhausted-bashing crash and tumble. The frozen world beneath me threatens to make my legs do the splits. But I am happy, here, alone in the high lands of Shropshire, walking to meet the dawn. As I rise up the hill, I hear the first cackle of the red grouse and the male is suddenly in front of me, confused by my headlamp. Only a few feet separate us and he is doing what creatures often do at this time of day - not very much. I pull up my long legs but can't focus in this low light. So I merely enjoy the encounter, glad of grouse company before I head up onto The Devil's Chair itself.

Publisher: Graffeg Limited

24 Stradey Park Business Centre,
Llanelli SA14 8YP Wales, United Kingdom.
Tel: +44 (0)1554 824000 sales@graффeg.com
www.граффeg.com

Sales: Signature

Tel: +44 (0)845 862 1730 www.signaturebooksuk.com

Distribution: Combined Book Services

Tel: +44 (0)1892 837171 www.combook.co.uk

Wales: Welsh Books Council

Tel: +44 (0)1970 624455 www.gwales.com

GRAFFEG