

Glorious Hampshire

The Beautiful and Varied Landscapes of a Very English County

COLIN ROBERTS

From rolling chalk hills to heather-clad moors, the glorious landscapes of Hampshire are varied and beautiful. It is one of England's most wooded counties, a stronghold for wildflowers, and is famed for its open downland. This book celebrates the character and contrast of Hampshire's countryside with a collection of fine art photographs taken in all seasons.

The sweeping landscapes of two National Parks – the New Forest and the South Downs – are represented in panoramic style, as are the lush green valleys of the county's renowned chalk streams. On a smaller scale, natural details have not been missed – such as the beauty of woodland ferns and spring flowers, and the shapes and forms of native trees.

Light and atmosphere have been used to create memorable and thought-provoking images. The narrative provides a further insight – each photograph is accompanied by the author's unique knowledge of the subject, gleaned from thirty years' experience in the countryside. The text also explains how some images came to be taken, including the composition, timing and weather. Viewpoints are described, by-ways and footpaths explored, and hidden woodland glades revealed.

This book provides a unique portrait of a very English county, and some remarkable glimpses of the natural world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



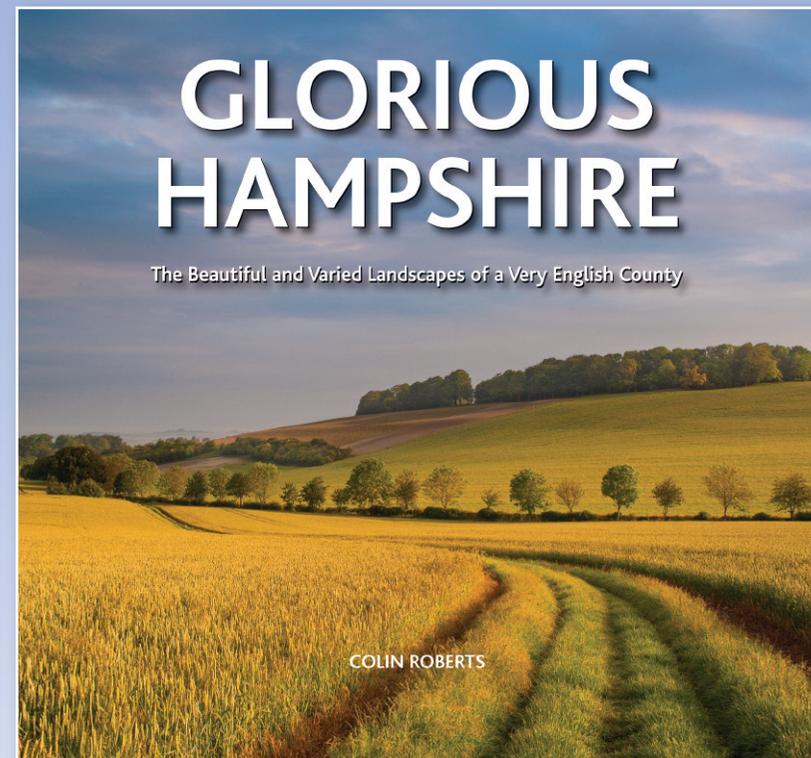
Colin Roberts was born in Cheshire but spent his early years in West Africa. In 1970 his family settled in Hampshire and he became interested in the natural world, exploring the local countryside as he grew up. He took up photography after leaving college, and by 1990 he was concentrating on landscapes and nature. He went on to become the UK's 'Amateur Photographer of the Year' before turning professional.

He has travelled throughout Britain, but the landscape of Hampshire remains at the heart of his work. He has received a number of awards for his nature images including 'International Garden Photographer of the Year' and the Royal Horticultural Society's 'Photographer of the Year'.

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GLORIOUS HAMPSHIRE



Left: The peaceful waters of the Itchen at Ovington



Left: College Mead weir on the Itchen Navigation



Below: Longstock's thatched river hut in late May



Right: Banks of lavender near Oakley



Right: Wildflowers on Butser Hill

Example of a double page spread.

GLORIOUS HAMPSHIRE



Wild cherry blossom on the lane to Ashley

Blossom near Ashley
In spring and summer when the countryside is flushed with wildflowers it's easy to forget the contribution being made by trees. Among others blackthorn, hawthorn, wild cherry, willow and chestnut all add to the floral beauty in the landscape.

I was reminded of this when I came across some cherry blossom near Farley Mount, in mid-April. The tree stands in the hedgerow beside the lane on Ashley Down against the backdrop of a wide sloping field. A number of yews on its western side must provide something of a windbreak, helping to shield its delicate blossoms from the prevailing wind. The petals shone brilliant white in the spring sunlight, making a vivid contrast with the rustic bark and green field beyond.

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SPRING

Bluebells at Micheldever Forest
As one who follows nature, it's my belief that, few sights can be more inspiring than a deciduous woodland coming into leaf. At Micheldever the display is taken to an extreme, with birch trees and bluebells dominating the scene. The tapering boughs of pale green leaves arching over a fragrant blue carpet create a natural spectacle year after year.

When I'm working in woodlands I prefer the soft light of overcast days – it avoids the harsh shadows created by bright sunlight, and reveals details more clearly. When this photograph was taken an unseasonal mist gave a shadowless light, and softened the vibrant colours to give a more atmospheric scene.

At Micheldever in April



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