

What the eye cannot see



This image would be gone in the blink of an eye. It took a camera giving an exposure of 1/8000th of a second to reveal the spectacular in-flight plumage of this red shafted northern flicker.

The picture was taken by the British wildlife photographer Roy Hancliff using a home-made system set up in his garden in British Columbia, Canada.

His camera shutter opens and closes 250 times faster than a person can blink and is linked to five flashes firing at 1/20,000th of a second.

Mr Hancliff, 65, said: "When I take the shot, it's so quick I don't see it. You really have no idea what you are getting until you review the pictures. I'm looking for something unusual like a bird coming head on or with its wings spread. It has to be dramatic."