

# Moondyne Ghost Eye trail cameras

by Don Caswell



Moondyne Ghost Eye 3GExtreme and Tracker trail cameras.



The control panel and screen on the back of the Ghost Eye trail camera.

Recently, I have been experimenting with Moondyne Ghost Eye Series 3GExtreme MMS and the Tracker trail cameras, made available by Rugged Xtremes. When I unpacked the cameras, the necessary 16GB SD cards plus packs of brand-new batteries were also included. This was a nice touch from Rugged Xtremes.

I had a close look at the cameras and ran through the instructions for use - all seemed pretty straightforward. For the initial testwork, I did not bother with the MMS (multimedia messaging service) and email capability of the 3GExtreme model. I just set them both up for digital photography, leaving the video for later as well.

Both models have 12MP imaging and 1080p HD video. The Black Flash infrared LEDs give 20m of night-vision flash. The

52-degree field of view has variable sensitivity and can detect up to 25m. The units are waterproof to IP54 standard, which is good because they will be exposed to the rain of the wet northern tropics.

We live in a rural area and being surrounded by farms, heavy forest, grasslands and wetlands, we see plenty of wildlife. Deer, pigs and wild dogs are spotted fairly regularly and there is a wealth of native wildlife and birds to be appreciated too. I do not have to go any further than my garden to test the trail cameras on a passing parade of wildlife. I always try out new trail cameras for a week or so in the garden before taking them further afield, once I am happy with them.

My wife had noted that something was eating the sprouting vegetables she had planted. On closer investigation, the fallow

end of the veggie garden had some diggings that looked to be the work of a rabbit. We are not short of bandicoots but they have a different style of earthworks. I placed the cameras at either end of the bean trellis and left them to do their thing for the best part of a week.

It is always a buzz loading trail camera images onto the computer - you just never know what you are going to find! I was not disappointed either. There were hundreds of images. About half of those showed my wife and I working in the garden, but the other half featured a good selection of the local wildlife. It should be noted that I could have avoided the photos of us working in the garden as the cameras can be programmed to only detect in set time periods. In a security situation, that might be from 6pm until 7am, for example.

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The majority of the photos showed a rabbit all right, in the wee hours after midnight mostly. There were also bandicoots, curlews, plovers and quite a variety of other birds that visit the garden during the day. The most exciting image, just on the edge of frame at 4am in the morning, was a big black wild dog that is typical of this area. I have seen this fellow at our place a couple of times in the past 12 months and the trail camera indicated he is probably a much more regular visitor than I appreciated.

The next assignment for the Moondyne trail cameras was on a nearby farm where wild dogs had been killing calves and pet dogs. I spent a couple of hours having a good look at the farm and its neighbouring environs. There was a creek running through the place, which was most likely a conduit for the wild dogs. There was plenty of dog sign too. That was no surprise as the owner had told me that the dog packs he had been sighting varied from seven to more than 20.

The neighbouring farms were under cane and that added to the shelter that the dogs could take advantage of. Sugar cane is a fairly new crop in this area and previously the lower growth of crops like potatoes and beans had not given the dogs any shelter. So, with high hopes, I placed the cameras over some likely looking spots and obtained some fuzzy images at the limit of the camera's range during the night. Better pictures would have been nice, but the camera showed me, in all the details I needed, what sort of dogs, how many and when they had passed through.

I know a number of young fellows who hunt boars with dogs in and around the cane and other crops. In the past couple of years, they have really increased their success rate on big, wily old boars by using trail cameras with MMS capability. Typically, they have their utes loaded with the dogs on going to bed. In the early hours, the bedside mobile phone chirps as a photo is



sent through from one of the field cameras. The boys scramble and often within 15 minutes they have bagged a 100kg-plus boar that has eluded them for years. Obviously, other than hunting, this is a great feature for a security situation as well.

It is that sort of capability that will create great appeal for the Moondyne Ghost Eye 3GExtreme MMS trail camera. The manufacturer recommends using the Telstra NextG 3G network, which has the best coverage in country areas (something I can vouch for) and it will work anywhere where a Telstra mobile receives coverage. A Telstra SIM card is required and the best approach to that is a \$30 Prepaid Plus Package, the same as you would use in a mobile phone. With that card the MMS messages come through at no charge. You may well need to stress this to the Telstra shop you deal with, as the staff typically have no experience with trail cameras and may well recommend a card that will not work as well.

Moondyne also says that it has found that the SIM cards from Aldi Mobile are a cheaper alternative (they have a \$15 per month one) and run on the same frequency as the NextG Telstra network. So far in their experience, the Aldi cards have worked on Ghost Eye trail cameras everywhere that the Telstra ones did, but there

may be exceptions to that.

There is a free app available for download that allows for remote setting changes. When searching for it, it is one word 'trail-camera' and can be had for both IOS and Android smart-phones. That way you can, if need be, do some remote reprogramming of the camera in situ, without having to approach it in person. That could be very useful in most monitoring situations.

The instruction booklet is simple and well laid out. Likewise the camera controls, which are just a few buttons. The menu system is basic and uncomplicated. For those with a dose of technophobia, or just in a hurry, the cameras can be set up and activated without you having to be an IT whizz. Most of the necessary settings are by default ready to use. However, I would recommend giving it a run at home so you can be sure of the settings, and results, before you head off into the remote wilderness to deploy it in the field. If that thylacine, sambar or whatever, comes mooching past right in front of the camera, you want to be sure of capturing the moment.

The retail price of the Moondyne Ghost Eye Tracker model retails for around \$299, while the more advanced 3GExtreme is \$499. For more information, contact Rugged Extremes on 08 9274 8889 or visit [moondyne.com.au](http://moondyne.com.au) ●



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## Specifications

Moondyne Ghost Eye Model	Tracker	3GExtreme MMS
Image Sensor	5 Mega Pixel Color CMOS	5 Mega Pixel Color CMOS
Effective Pixels	2560x1920	2560x1920
Day/Night modes	Yes	Yes
Memory	Supports SD card (8-32 GB)	Supports SD card (8-32 GB)
Lens	F=3.0, FOV=52 degrees, auto IR-cut-remove (at night)	
LCD screen	2" TFT, RGB, 262k	2" TFT, RGB, 262k
Picture Format & Size	JPEG 5MP (2592x1944), 8MP (3264x2448), 12MP (4000x3000)	
Video Format & Resolution	AVI 1080P (1920x1080), 720P (1280x720), VGA (640x480), 320x160	AVI 1080P (1920x1080), 720P (1280x720), VGA (640x480)
Video Length	Programmable 1-60 seconds	Programmable 5-60 seconds
Multi-shot Photos	Programmable 1-7	Programmable 1-5
Trigger Time	0.8 second	0.4 second
Trigger Interval	2-5 seconds	4-7 seconds
Trigger Delay	N/A	Programmable 3sec – 24hour
Power	6V or DC 6-12V	12V or DC 12V
Battery Type	8xAA	8xAA
External DC	6-12V/ 1-2A DC	12V/ 1-2A DC
Mounting	Strap (supplied), 1/4" in-built tripod thread	
Operating Temp & Humidity	-20C to 60C, 5 to 90 per cent	-30C to 60C, 5 to 90 per cent
Dimensions & Dry Weight	135x100x75mm, 300g	130x100x80mm (without aerial), 350g (incl aerial)
App	N/A	IOS & Android
RRP	\$299	\$499



- 0.4s** TRIGGER TIME
  - 12 Mp** MAX. IMAGE
  - 1080p** FULL HD VIDEO
  - 56** INFRARED LEDs
  - PIR** (PASSIVE INFRARED)
  - IR NIGHT VISION**
  - MULTI-SHOT: 5 PHOTOS**
  - WATERPROOF**
  - TIME LAPSE**
  - iOS**
  - Android APP**
- 12 Mega pixel photo & 1080p HD video with 0.4s trigger time
  - 56 x 940nm (Black Flash) infrared LEDs gives 25 metres night vision flash
  - 52° FOV with high, med or low PIR sensitivity can detect up to 25m
  - Crystal clear day and night photo/video quality
  - Time lapse, delay, timer, time stamp, SD cycle, camera ID, photo, multi shot photo, video, photo and video
  - Sends photos via MMS to phone or email (When SIM card installed)
  - 2 piece construction with Large built-in 2" TFT colour screen
  - Supports 8gb - 32gb SD card
  - Waterproof IP 54

Supplied with  
 1 x Quick adjustable webbing strap  
 1 x USB to mini USB cable  
 1 x TV cable  
 1 x Aerial



- 0.8s** TRIGGER TIME
  - 12 Mp** MAX. IMAGE
  - 1080p** FULL HD VIDEO
  - 40** INFRARED LEDs
  - PIR** (PASSIVE INFRARED)
  - IR NIGHT VISION**
  - MULTI-SHOT: 7 PHOTOS**
  - WATERPROOF**
  - TIME LAPSE**
  - iOS**
  - Android APP**
- 12 Mega pixel photo & 1080p HD video with 0.8s trigger time
  - 40 x 940nm (Black Flash) infrared LEDs gives 20 metres night vision flash
  - 52° FOV with high, med or low PIR sensitivity can detect up to 25m
  - Crystal clear day and night photo/video quality
  - Time lapse, delay, timer, time stamp, SD cycle, camera ID, photo, multi shot photo, video, photo and video
  - Supports 8gb - 32gb SD card
  - Waterproof IP 54
  - 2 piece construction with Large built-in 2" TFT colour screen

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# GHOST EYE Giveaway!

Simply like and share our Facebook page to go into the draw for a GhostEye Trail Camera

[www.moondyne.com.au](http://www.moondyne.com.au)

One of each Tracker and 3GExtreme to give away

[www.facebook.com/moondyne.com.au](http://www.facebook.com/moondyne.com.au)