Photographer David Slater was on a trip to Indonesia when an endangered crested black macaque grabbed his camera and started taking hundreds of pictures.

When he looked at the shots, he spotted an incredible selfie of the grinning ape staring right into the camera lense.

The pictures went viral in newspapers, websites and magazines across the globe and the Gloucestershire photographer's work was thrust into the internet spotlight.

He originally requested the picture be taken off Wikipedia in 2012 and it was removed.

But then it was re-posted by Tomasz Kozlowski who said that under U.S. law any picture taken by an animal cannot have copyright.

Mr Kozlowski told the Daily Telegraph: “The work did not originate from Mr Slater as by his own admission he did not take the picture, the monkey did. However monkeys can’t and don’t own copyrights.”

Mr Slater said recently: "When I saw the picture I was just stunned. It was made even better when the story was picked up and it made thousands of people around the world happy.

"I had letters of congratulations from people as far as Iraq saying I'd made their day.

Mr Slater said: "It makes me very angry, I'm a professional photographer - it costs me over £2,000 to do the trip. It's my livelihood.

"You take 20,000 shots to get one image that sells, it was potentially a good earner for me, I've lost over £10,000 pounds because of it."