

placer color

Newsletter of the Placer Camera Club



Year 49 Number 5

PO Box 4990, Auburn, Ca. 95603

May 2011

est. 1952

<http://www.placercameraclub.org>

Placer Camera Club meets the third Tuesday of each month, except August, at 7:00PM in the Beecher Room of the Auburn Placer County Library, 350 Nevada Street, Auburn, Ca. **Visitors Welcome!**

This month's meeting will be Tuesday **May 17th**. Informal gathering at **6:30** with the meeting starting **promptly** at **7 PM**.

This month.....

We have **Image Evaluations**. The judge will be **Bill Papke**. Projected images, both digital and slides as well as prints can be entered. Please send your digital entries to placercameraclub@gmail.com no later than noon on Tuesday May 17th.

Your entries for the **Annual Competition** are due no later than **Friday June 3rd**. By now you should have all received the email from our secretary Liz Staats on what you entered during the year. The image you enter in the annual competition must have been entered in an image evaluation during our year which is from Sept 2010 to May 2011. For the annual competition 4 images can be entered in each category. That's 4 entries in Open, 4 in Nature, etc. Projected and prints are separate competitions. You can also enter 4 in each category in prints. Theme entered images do not qualify; they must have been entered in an image evaluation. You can bring your **prints & slides to the May meeting** or take them to Judy Hooper's house. If it is a digital image I should have it so all you have to do is send me an email with the titles of the images you would like to enter. A date that the image was entered would be a great help.

The Annual Competition is just that. It's a true competition with 1st, 2nd, 3rd and honorable mentions in each category. The judging is done outside of the club (judge to be announced) because of the large volume. The results and awards will be given at the June meeting.

The June meeting is time for club officer elections. If you would like to run for a club officer position or nominate someone you can do that at the June meeting. Please consider participating in your club.

Event Calendar

May 17

Monthly meeting
Image evaluations
Projected & prints
Annual entries accepted

June 3

Annual entries due

June 21

Monthly meeting
Theme is Motion or
Humor
Member slide shows
Club Officer Elections

July 19

Monthly meeting
Annual awards
T.B.A.

August

Club picnic
No monthly meeting

*See last page for club
officers & committees*

This month we start a new feature called **Question of the Month**.

The way this works is I will ask a question and members can reply to me via email. I will publish the reply's in the next newsletter.

This month's question is **how do you print?**

What we would like to hear is, do you print at home, do you send your prints out, if so where? It doesn't matter if you are new to printing, or an old hand we would like to hear your process and equipment for making prints.

I'll start out: I have several printers but the one I use most often is the Epson Stylus Pro 3800. It is a 17 inch wide format printer that uses Epson's K3 inkset. It has 3 shades of black which makes it nice for black & white prints on luster paper. In addition to the 3800 I print my own canvas gallery wraps on an Epson 9600.

Let me hear how you print. We can all learn from each other. Maybe you have a favorite place that does great prints at a good price or a printer or method of printing that we can all learn from.

One last note: if you print at home it's important to choose the correct icc profile for the paper you are using. In addition: you can have your printer do the print interpretation or have software such as Photoshop do it. You want to make sure that only one of the two are doing it, not both. Either your printer interprets the photo for printing or the software does. Double profiling leads to bad color.

In addition make sure your monitor is profiled with a color calibration device. That way your prints will look like what you see on your monitor.

The club has a Huey monitor calibration device that members can borrow to calibrate their monitor.

Send me an email on how you make your prints and I'll run it the next newsletter.

Mike Schumacher radoman@sebastiancorp.net

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I took this photo with my new Nikon D90, off my back deck facing north at 11 am, on April 7th of this year. It was a perfect time of day, and the air was especially cool, clean and crisp...perfect conditions to photograph the famous Sierra spring clouds. As always, I processed the shot in Adobe Photoshop CS4...just a little contrast enhancement, slight cropping.

Submitted by
Ardath Winterowd



Digital Infrared

Text & Photos by Bruce Gregory

Recently I had a camera converted for Digital Infrared capture. Infrared light occurs at wavelengths above visible light. Visual light is from about 400-700 NM (nanometers). Ultra Violet (UV) light occurs below that, Infrared occurs above visible light. Near Infrared, 700-1400 NM, is where most Infrared cameras and films record. My camera is a "regular" conversion and was converted to @ 720 NM..

Most digital sensors "see" IR but have a "hot mirror" or filter over the sensor that excludes IR wavelengths and passes only visible light. The conversion is done by removing the hot mirror and replacing it with different filter or a piece of plain glass.

There are several choices of what kind of conversion you can get, I chose the "regular" because it's an all around conversion. You get a color image that you can use as color or black & white.. other conversions are "Super Color" or B& W only.

Now... Why in the heck would I want to do that ?? It's a different way to see things, things are visible that don't necessarily stand out in a conventional capture. Tree limbs show up through foliage, rock strata shows up in grasses, you get shape defining contrast where it's not apparent to the naked eye, clouds pop out of overcast, water darkens, green foliage goes white, blue skies go dark, clouds get whiter.. Effects are pronounced in bright sunlight, subdued in the shade (less IR light).

I've attached some examples, all taken since March 27 when I got the camera back from the conversion company. The titles will reflect some of the visible elements & you can see how the camera saw the elements.

Color balance is an issue..the picture I submitted last month had the color temp bumped about 100 degrees & a slight magenta cast appeared.. the camera is given a custom white balance at the conversion company, & I haven't been able to get one I like better. The higher you set the white balance the more red appears.. for me, for now I'm going to continue using the conversion companies settings..

There are a couple of books out there on Digital IR, David Busch's Digital Infrared Pro Secrets (2007) and Joe Farace's Complete Guide to Digital Infrared Photography (2007). Both are available as used on sites like Amazon & Alibris.

You can get the IR effect by using a screw-on filter on your regular camera. Either a Hoya R72 or a Kodak Wratten 89b, they run from \$75-\$250 depending on the sizes. The disadvantage is that the filters are very dense, you just about have to take the filter off to focus, and the exposures are very long frequently necessitating a tripod. A converted camera acts like a conventional camera, hand-holdable much of the time, ISO's respond like "normal".

The good news is that if you have a retired digital camera it most likely can be converted, I haven't been digital for long enough to retire a camera so I found a good sale price on a Nikon D-90 SLR and had that converted.. You can also convert a Super-Zoom or a Point & Shoot camera, the conversion companies

have details about specific models.

My conversion was done by www.lifepixel.com the other company I know that has a good reputation is www.maxmax.com Both companies have a lot of info & galleries on their websites. As of 5/3/11 Life Pixel was having a sale of \$250 for a conversion vs the regular price of \$450. Max Max will sell you a camera for conversion, but it's at full retail, for it was \$500 cheaper to buy my own camera on sale & get the conversion done by Life Pixel.

I'm really taken by this process, if you give it a try you might be smitten too..

Bruce Gregory



Green Foliage, American River, Iowa Hill Rd

Green Trees, Dark Soil, Blue Sky



Rock Striations through the grass

Close-ups and Portraits

Don't Let Your Background Compete for Attention

Text and Photos by Sue Barthelow

Lately, I've been taking pictures of flowers in the garden and in the wild. Flowers, close-ups and portrait images are similar beasts. The subject always looks better when the background doesn't compete with it. A distracting background can turn a great picture into a mediocre one. There are three main things that cause the background to attract attention – busyness, coloring and lighting.

Busy Backgrounds

One way to simplify a busy background is to use a wide-open aperture to throw it out of focus. There are 4 ways to do this. 1) Use your camera's portrait mode. 2) Use your camera's macro mode. 3) Use aperture priority and set it to a low number. 4) Use a macro/micro lens. If you don't know how to set and use programmed and aperture priority camera settings, check your manual or ask a fellow photographer who has a similar camera.

The more distant the background is from the subject, the easier it is to blur. If there is plenty of room between the subject and the background, you can get more depth of field for your subject by using an aperture that brings more of it into focus while still blurring the background.

Don't forget to watch out for distracting background objects that seem to grow out your subject. For example, you don't want a pole growing out of a person's head. Can't keep something out of the picture but have a digital image? Use an image editor like Photoshop and remove it using the computer.

Competing Background Colors

When you're setting your shot up, look through the viewfinder to see how background colors complement or distract from your subject. When the background colors draw your attention away from the subject or clash in color, your image will suffer. You may be able to move a little to one side to improve the background. If not, look for another subject in the case of a flower, or move your subject to another spot with a better background.

If you have a digital image, you can dull background colors using an image editor to save an otherwise good picture.

Background Lighting

Contrast between your subject and the background is necessary. A bright subject stands out better against a darker background and a dark subject stands out better in front of a lighter background.

On the other hand, high contrast in the background attracts attention and should be avoided. Bright areas within darker regions draw your eyes away from the subject. Try to compose your shot to minimize bright areas in a dark background. The same holds true for dark areas within lighter regions. You can darken or lighten background areas in a digital image using an image editor.

Example Photos

Notice how the poppy photo improves by getting closer to the flowers to simplify the image and then slightly blurring the background. The image improves even more when going closer and filling the frame with fewer flowers while keeping some of the foliage as a background.



Although an interesting image, the iris picture with the light and dark background shows how a background can compete with the subject. Moving to another flower, the dark background allows the subject to command all attention.



Smooth Flowing Water

Text and Photos by Sue Barthelow

Most photos depict a scene as it was when the shutter snapped - that blink of an eye image captured in vivid detail. However, many dynamic scenes improve when you add motion to your pallet. Flowing water is an excellent dynamic subject. Excite the artist in you as the water splashes by.



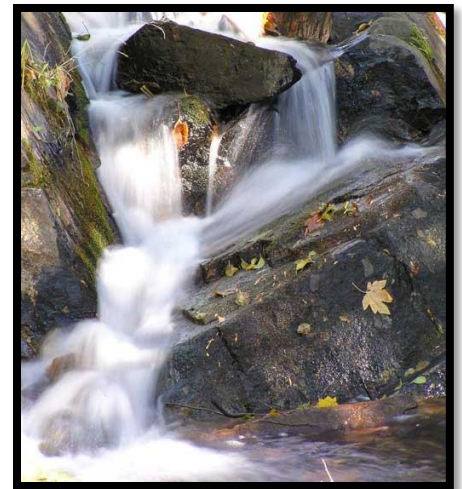
Water movement can be shot as everything from a static scene to a silky flow. Spring is the season that fills the local creeks and rivers with rushing volumes. Now is the time to perfect your smooth water shots.

Make the water flow like silk by using a long shutter speed. Take a number of shots at different speeds and then pick the image you like the best. Every situation has different light and, thus, needs different camera settings.

To keep the shutter open for the time needed to smooth the flow, you need dim light. Too much light is guaranteed to over expose your image. Controlling the light is the key to smoothing the flow.

How can you dim the light?

- Shoot early or late in the day when the ambient light level is low.
- Use a neutral density filter to block the light that gets through your lens. Also referred to as a stop-down filter, neutral density filters come in either a round form that screws onto the front of your lens or a rectangular form that slides into a frame that mounts on your lens. You can buy one of these filters to reduce the light by from 1 to 6 f-stops.
- Use a polarizing filter. This filter will keep up to 2 f-stops of the light out of your lens. Perhaps even more important, it will improve your image by cutting out reflections coming from the water or wet rocks.
- Find running water that is in deep shade.



- Set your aperture to the highest setting allowed by your camera. This makes a tiny opening that will cut out much of the light.
- Combine your dimming techniques. You may find that deep shade and a polarizing filter are all you need.

The water may be moving, but you want everything else to remain sharp. Don't forget to use your tripod. Long shutter speed shots cannot be hand held

Bird & Flower Adventures in Grass Valley

Text and Photos By Walter Carnahan

Eliot Porter in his 1972 "Birds of North America" writes "the most satisfactory outlet for expressing my excitement over birds was the camera.... Bird Photography is a pursuit that involves one in long hours of quiet sitting in the woods ... The secret of wildlife observation is obvious – and in truth no secret at all - for it merely requires close attentiveness to all the minutiae of what goes on around one, made possible by a stillness of posture so that to other creatures one becomes just another object in nature."



My new 2 GB CF Card wasn't getting any use. I put it my camera the day before getting up early to try for the Great Gray Owl on Pleistocene Ridge Road. I've been chasing this bird off and on for three years. Jan Evers reported it at least three years ago and her website gave the only picture of it I've seen. Alas, Barb and I had been out on the Ridge Road since 7:30 AM and around 10 we gave up and came home empty handed.

In the afternoon I went over to the Wolf Creek part of Empire Mine State Park that runs along Bennett St. in Grass Valley. This beautiful old farm was donated to the park a few years back. The pear trees are just through blooming and the apple blossoms are coming on. South of the creek is an old road through some trees which opens onto a secluded riparian zone and most of the fruit trees. The North side along Bennett St. is a completely different grassland habitat.

I missed pictures of the Bewicks and Winter Wrens who'd been singing along with the Pileated Woodpecker hammering on a tree too far away and decided to check out the purple flowering Giant Trillium I'd been snapping roughly every other day for the past week and ran off a few different exposures. My new extension tube lay at home as I'd forgotten to put it my pack.

Easter Sunday the rain had ended and the morning was cloud free and quiet. Armed with my extension tube this time I got some macro pictures of the purple flowering Giant



Trillium. The 25mm extension tube seems a bit too much and I'll return it in exchange for the 12mm.

A couple of years ago I'd seen the rarer white flowering Giant Trillium in the area and just as I was putting my gear away I spotted it on the other side of the creek in full bloom. I gathered my stuff and headed back to cross the creek in a dead trot as though I was afraid that it would disappear.

A Dark-eyed Junco posed on a blackberry vine on the way back to the truck. About to hang it up for the day when the Winter Wren started singing and I got a distant shot. The first warblers, orange-crowned and yellow-rumped are arriving now. Soon the Wilson's, Black-throated Grays and Townsends will congregate along the creek and I'll return to sit quiet in the woods and see what emerges.



WHAT JUDGES LOOK FOR IN PHOTOS

You're probably wondering why we pick one image over another; there actually are some simple rules of photography we look for in each photo. Common mistakes are:

(1) A photo out of focus, either the whole photo or part of it in an important location such as the bottom front of the print

(2) Too much "clutter" in the picture. We want our attention to go directly to the subject, not see a lot of competing, but not necessary, clutter around it.

(3) Exposure - is the picture too light or too dark to easily see the subject.

(4) Poor lighting, a "flat" image where rocks, subject, sky, etc. all blend together without different shadows, colors, etc. or the opposite where the sun might bleach out the lighter parts of the image, giving no texture to those areas.

There are other more subtle criteria we look for; placement of the subject, size of the subject within the image, etc. but the 4 listed above are the first and foremost most commonly seen, easily correctible problems that usually cause a photo to be eliminated.

For more specific guidelines, please feel free to drop in on any of our Placer Camera Club meetings and ask questions! We have meetings the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 at the Beecher Room in the Library off Nevada Street. We have short programs, critique our own images, have "how-to" presentations and to end it all, great desserts!!



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Placer Camera Club Webpage

Check out the Placer Camera Club webpage.

<http://placercameraclub.org>

*Don't forget our tutorials webpage. It's
at:*

<http://www.placercameraclub.org/tutorials/index.html>

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Huey Monitor Calibration

The club has a Huey monitor calibration system for use by club members.

Contact Judy Hooper to 'check out' Huey.

530-888-8308.