

# In Focus

February 2016

The newsletter of the TriState Photographic Society

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## Photo Tip - Photographing Wildlife

Many people both new photographers and very experienced photographers believe they are so handicapped by their equipment that they can't do wildlife photography. Generally I think that is wrong thinking. The most important tool in wildlife photography is your brain. Before setting out to photograph wildlife, you need to know where to find your wildlife target and when. You need to know the habits and habitat of the target species.

Let's look at an example. If we want to photograph a mountain goat, we are not going to be successful if we look for them in the tri state area. Nor would we search in Kansas with its pancake flat topography. We need to find out where they are at the specific date we want to make our photographs. Some of the best ways to find this information are to ask other photographers, books, and to search the internet.

Using these sources we will find some specific areas where the Mountain Goats will be, let's say in late May or early June. Before those dates many of the places they inhabit will be snowed in. After that time they may be too high in the mountains to be easily reached.

Once we find some places to do find the target species, we can look for the easiest place to photograph and see if there are other species in the area that we may also desire to photograph.

A few years ago, I read a book on large animal concentrations in North America. Under Mountain Goats the author mentioned Mt. Evans in Colorado. Here was a great concentration of both mountain goats AND mountain sheep. A bit of internet searching found more information about Mt. Evans. The road up Mt. Evans is the highest paved road in the USA. Okay the road to Pike's Peak is slightly higher, but isn't paved all the way to the top. The Mt. Evans road ends just short of 14,000 feet above sea level. I found discussion about altitude sickness. It would be best to spend several days in the area to become used to the altitude before exerting oneself.

Some other information was that the road didn't get plowed until around Memorial Day. There was also quite a bit of information on motels and restaurants.

We took the trip. Was it a good trip? NO, it was a great trip. While some of the goats and sheep needed a 500mm or longer lens, many of the sheep and goats could have easily been photographed with a 50mm lens. The sheep would actually get too close. They liked to lick road salt off of cars

Now that we have learned a bit about planning and researching wildlife photography, let's look at equipment. You don't need to have a super telephoto lens (400mm, 500mm, 600mm or 800mm). Many wild animals can be approached close enough to be photographed with lenses such as 100mm, 200mm and 300mm. Of course it is not a good idea to get too close to dangerous wildlife. We probably know not to get close to grizzly bears, black bears, bison, cougars, deer, moose and elk because they are dangerous. And of course, you would not want to get too close to venomous snakes. Fortunately there are solutions that can minimize risk when photographing dangerous animals. These solutions will be noted a little bit later in this article.

Most animals can be approached closely enough for photography. Animals in National Park are often fairly used to people and will tolerate people being close by. However it is important not to spook or harass wildlife. If the animal gets nervous back off. Many parks have rules about approaching animals. They are for your protection and the protection of the wildlife.

Some animals have no fear of people. If you photograph wildlife you will find semi-tame specimens. One example is a sea bird I photographed on the island of Bonaire. I noticed one morning a blue-footed booby was sitting at the end of a dock at our hotel. I got my 70-200mm lens and ran down to the dock. These are large birds and I expected no problem in photographing it. However there was a problem. The bird ran to where I was kneeling to get an eye level portrait and began banging his large bill against my lens.

One year a gray fox built a den for her pups under our back steps. I photographed them from a portable blind but it was obvious she knew the blind was occupied but knew I was no threat. Later I could photograph her with a 70-200mm lens without a blind.

There are several solutions that can solve the lack of long lenses for the wildlife photographer. So far we have seen that some animals are tamer than others. But what do you already have in your camera bag? If you have a 200mm prime or zoom lens that can reach 200mm, you already have a lens that can be used for large and/or semi tame animals. Add a 1.4x teleconverter, and now you have the equivalent of a 280mm lens. Add a 1.7x teleconverter and you have the equivalent of a 340mm lens, a 2x converter will give you the equivalent of a 400mm lens. If you have a 55-300mm or similar, a 1.4x teleconverter can give you the equivalent of a 420mm lens. These lens and teleconverter combinations are more than adequate for bird photography and general nature photography.

Another advantage of teleconverters is that they not only increase magnifications so they mimic longer lenses, they also allow closer focusing so you can get closer than most longer lenses which also increases magnifications. The downside of teleconverters is they cost you light.

If you desire a lens for general wildlife photography there are several lenses that give high focal lengths that have the reach of the super telephotos at considerably lower prices. In addition they focus closer than the super telephotos so small birds are actually easier to photograph than with the super telephoto primes. While not exactly cheap, these quality zooms may be in your budget range.

Some examples of these lenses are the Canon 100-400mm (\$2199), and the Nikon 200-500mm (\$1399). You might also consider the Sigma 150-600mm sports lens (\$1999). I can only speak personally about the Nikon 200-500 f5.6 VR4 lens. It is just as sharp as the 500mm f/4 prime and can be handheld.

There is another part of wildlife photography that can be easily done without busting the budget. It can be done anywhere, even your yard. It is macro photography. Insects and spiders, etc. are just as much wildlife as mountain goats.

I constantly stress that we need to photograph new things or things in a different perspective. There are huge numbers of insects and spiders that have never been seen by most people. Getting into macro photography is not very expensive and as above you may have some or all of the equipment in your camera bag. You might already have a macro lens but if you don't, you can make a lens function like a macro lens by adding extension tube(s) or a filter type of close up attachment.

A set of several auto focus extension tubes for most digital cameras can be as low as \$80. Another option is a close up attachment such as the Canon 500D 77mm (fits all brands of lenses using 77mm filters) for \$149. Both of these are great options.

Some nice to have accessories for all types of wildlife photography are a sturdy tripod and one or more electronic flash units. While not absolutely necessary to have they make your work easier.

At this point it becomes a matter of understanding proper exposure, best f/stops for depth of field, shutter speeds to stop action and using light. One tip that can help you make your images look more alive is to include an eye highlight. This is easy to do. If you have the light coming from your back, you can usually get the eye highlight

Remember successful wildlife photography includes targeting a species, researching habits/locations, choosing needed equipment, and choosing the correct times and exposure

## New Feature: Places to Photograph in 2016

This feature will continue to grow. Please send any information that could be used here to the editor so it can be added.

These places have been selected to give some options for photographers for personal field trips. Most can be done in one day or less but a few are best if you can spare a couple of days or more.

### Photo Opportunities in March:

Early wildflowers will begin to pop up. Several areas may be worth investigating for early wildflowers such as trout lilies, Dutchmen's breeches, and squirrel corn are found in the Tristate area. Timing of blooms depends on temperatures, so if you don't find wildflowers when you visit one of the following areas go back at 1 week intervals until you find the blooms.

#### Good areas for wildflowers:

Boone Cliffs County Park (Boone County KY)  
Big Bone State Park (Boone County, KY)  
Highland Cemetery (Kenton County, KY)  
Red River Gorge (Slade KY)  
Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge (Seymour, Indiana)  
Sharon Woods County Park (Sharonville, OH)

### Photo Opportunities in April

Visit the same areas as in March to photograph more species of wildflowers as the blooming continues. Each month we will start seeing different flowers blooming. Also in April, we will be seeing the return of summer resident birds.

#### Organized events for March:

Cumberland Falls SRP:Photography Weekend  
Wildflower weekend Natural Bridge State Resort Park  
Herpetology Weekend at Natural Bridge State Resort Park  
Wildflower Pilgrimage Carter Caves State Park (KY)

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## 2016 Club Competitions Subjects:

Pictorial	Nature	
January	<del>OPEN</del> "RED"	
February	<del>FRUITS/VEGETABLES</del> OPEN	
March	OPEN FORMAL	WILDLIFE
April	LOCKS	FORMAL OPEN
May	OPEN	FOREST FLOOR
June	INFORMAL PORTRAIT	OPEN

July	OPEN	GONE TO SEED
August	STAIRS/STAIRCASES`	FORMAL OPEN
September	FORMAL OPEN	WATERFOWL
October	BEVERAGE CANS	OPEN
November	FORMAL OPEN	MOUNTAIN(S)/HILL(S)/VALLEY(S)
December	ARCHES/DOORS/WINDOWS	OPEN

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## Club Competition Results January 2016

### Pictorial – Open

#### Tyro Informal Prints:

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Jim Hurtle	Move Over I'm Coming Through
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Julie Wright	Baby Fingers are Delicious

#### Tyro Projected Digital Images:

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Nee Charette	Ready for Christmas
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#### Accomplished Transparencies

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Ann Deering	Redi Light
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Margaret Jones	Passion Flower

#### Accomplished Informal Prints

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Mark Kraus	Open Wide
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Tie	Richard Jones	Bleeding Hearts
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Tie	Jane McBreen	Old Brown Eyes
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	Lisa Hathorn	Calico Corn
5 <sup>th</sup> Place Tie	Ted Denman	Hybrid White
5 <sup>th</sup> Place Tie	Donna Loughry	Crown & Towers
7 <sup>th</sup> Place	John Deering	Autumn in Kentucky

#### Accomplished Projected Digital Images

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Jerry Carpenter	Pink Coral
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Bryan Haakenson	Folly Beach Sunrise
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Dale Voelker	Waitin' for the Weddin'
4 <sup>th</sup> Place	Roger Ginn	6 Second Art
5 <sup>th</sup> Place	Nelson Charette	Old Front Porch

Nature: RED

**Informal Prints Tyro**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Melvin Whitehead	Red Leaves of Autumn
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Julie Wright	#FF 1535
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	Ted Scheall	Red Crown

**Projected Digital Images Tyro**

	none	
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**Informal Prints Accomplished**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Mark Kraus	Snowny Red Bird
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Tie	Jane McBreen	Big Daddy
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place Tie	Joy Sallee	Male Cardinal
4 <sup>th</sup> Place Tie	Paul Ice	Feeding Frenzy
4 <sup>th</sup> Place Tie	Richard Jones	Male Cardinal
6 <sup>th</sup> Place	Ted Denman	Wild Red
7 <sup>th</sup> Place	Margaret Jones	Cardinal Flower

**Projected Digital Images Accomplished**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Nelson Charette	Red Macaw
2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	Dale Voelker	South Rim Sunset
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place Tie	Jerry Carpenter	Red Hot Hibiscus
3 <sup>rd</sup> Place Tie	Teresa McGill	Cardinal
5 <sup>th</sup> Place	Ron Beck	Holly Berries

**Transparencies Accomplished**

1 <sup>st</sup> Place	Ann Deering	Arches at Sunset
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**NEW:Featured Photography Destination:  
Red River Gorge (Daniel Boone National Forest)  
By Richard Jones**

**Location:** The Slade Exit (#33) on Kentucky's Mountain Parkway is approximately 173 miles from downtown Cincinnati. When exiting Parkway, turn left and cross the Parkway and turn left on KY 15 and then right on KY77. To visit Natural Bridge State Resort Park turn right as you exit the Parkway.

**Best Time to Visit:** Year Round

**Photographic subjects:** Year round

**Fall-Winter:** Scenics, Black bear, and of course the area is famous for its more than 100 natural arches, and rock houses which are a bit more visible when the leaves have dropped from the trees. Fall features great color as the trees prepare for winter

**Spring/Summer:** There will be a progression of wildflowers (including some rare such as the White-haired Goldenrod found nowhere else in the world), birds and butterflies. **Activities:** Hiking (70 Miles of marked trails), photography, canoeing, rock climbing, exploring the Gladie Historic Site (remains include barn and original log cabin), and privately owned zip lines

**Nearby attractions:** Natural Bridge State Resort Park, hotel, restaurant, ski lift to Natural Bridge

**Closest hotels/ motels:** Same Exit: Natural Bridge SRP hotel, numerous cabin rentals and bed and breakfast accommodations

**Park Fees:** The only fees are for camping in the gorge. Natural Bridge SRA free except for chairlift and camping

**General Description:** This is an easy day trip from Cincinnati, and there is enough to see to justify a few days or a week

**Equipment suggested:** Almost any lens may work for you in the Gorge.

**Hazards:** Poison ivy is abundant. Venomous Snakes (Copperheads and Timber Rattlesnakes), are present but rarely seen. Black Bear are becoming more common but usually not often during daylight hours. Falling off cliffs can and has been fatal. Don't hike when trails are wet or icy. Don't hike after dark.

**Books:** *Hiking Kentucky's Red River Gorge* available at most local book stores and on Amazon.com. Not generally available in the Gorge. At times you might be able to find a copy at the Natural Bridge SRP bookstore. It is best to buy it prior to your visit if you plan on any lengthy hikes.

**More information in the Gorge:** Gladie Cultural-Environmental Learning Center, 3451 Sky Bridge Road, KY 715, Stanton, KY 40380, phone: 606-663-8100. You can get a map of the Gorge free here.

**Special Places:** **Sky Bridge**, is a very large arch that you can walk out on and there is a 0.5 mile trail (#214) to get you to the bottom of the arch. Take a wide angle lens (14 or 17mm) if you want to photograph the whole arch. **Rock Bridge** is a natural arch with a good size stream flowing under it. It is reached by a 1.5 mile long loop trail (#207) from the parking lot. Be sure to make the entire loop. On one leg of the loop trail, you will find masses of wildflowers early in the season. On the other leg of the trail there are lots of dogwood trees. This trail is moderate. There are lots of rhododendrons around Rock Bridge. Note: I almost always find non-venomous snakes along this trail. There is a very remote chance of venomous snakes here. Dangerous snakes seem to avoid the trails and people. **Whittleton Branch Trail (#216)** is a 2 mile trail that starts at the end of the Whittleton Campground inside Natural Bridge SRP. Ask the campground attendant where you can park. This one of the best areas of the park for orchids, including the Yellow Lady Slipper (May), Indian Cucumber Root Plant, and Trilliums. Take a tripod and a macro lens. This trail is best from April to early June. You will not, however, find all of the wildflowers in bloom at the same time, so you will need to make several trips. This is an easy trail, but watch for poison ivy as the weather gets warmer. The best section of the trail is the first quarter mile. Most Lady Slippers occur in the first 200 feet. It is not necessary to walk the entire trail. **Red River road loop:** A great many wildflowers can be found along the loop road trail (KY 77, KY 215). One of the best places along this road is KY77 between the steel bridge and the junction of KY215. In July you can find Canada Lilies, and Leather Leaf Vine. During August you may find large stands of Cardinal flower near the information kiosk on KY77 not far from Nada Tunnel.

**Do you have a favorite place to photograph that you are willing to share with other club members? Please write it up and send it to the editor and it will be published in a future edition of In Focus.**

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## A Book that may be valuable for Photographers

### Nature identification:

Garden Insects of North America by Whitney Cranshaw, published by Princeton University Press ([WWW.princeton.edu](http://WWW.princeton.edu).) copyright 2004656 pages \$29.95

This book is subtitled The Ultimate Guide to Backyard Bugs and lives up it's title. It includes photographs of 1,420 insects that might be in your backyard. Also included are pictures of some of the eggs and larva. Distribution, host plants, and life history are also detailed. This book documents the most insects of any insect guides. Of course it is not all inclusive, but it is the one book that should be on your bookshelf if you photograph insects.

### NEW FEATURE: Websites of interest:

These websites may help you with photography:

<http://www.birdsasart.com>

<http://photo.net/learn/basic-photography-tips/>

<http://www.lightandmatter.org/2011/learn-photography/the-three-basics-of-photography/>

<http://digital-photography-school.com/camera-basics-101-the-exposure-triangle/>

## **NEW FEATURE: Classified Ads**

If you have any photographic items for sale, contact the editor and they will be in the next newsletter.

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### **Camera News**

Canon has announced two new DSLRs that are very similar to the recently announced Nikon D5 and the Nikon D500. This is the first time that there have been such closely aligned models from both Canon and Nikon.

The new Canon 1DxMark II uses CF and CF cards while the Nikon D5 uses two XQD cards (or one can choose another version of the D5 that uses two Compact Flash cards). A comparison of the full frame models appears on page 8 of this newsletter.

The second Canon offering, the 7D mark II, is very similar to the Nikon D500. Both are cropped 20MP sensors. Canon has chosen to use one CF slot and one SD slot for memory. Nikon chose to use one XQD slot and one SD slot. In either case, using both slots will reduce the number of shots per second to match the slower card.

In the March issue of In Focus, there will be a direct comparison of the new cropped versions of Canons and Nikons.

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### **DVDs of interest:**

Recently the Great Courses Company released a volume II of the *Fundamentals of Photography*. The first volume was primarily intended for new photographers but was also a good refresher for experienced photographers. *Fundamentals of Photography II* is meant for more experienced photographers but there is a great deal of information for the new photographer as well. Each set of DVDs consists of a series of 30 minute lectures on a variety of subjects. They are both worthwhile for all photographers. Both volumes emphasize the development of creativity in order to be able to make striking images with new ways of seeing subjects.

Joel Sartore is the presenter for the lectures in both volumes. He is a long time contributor to National Geographic Magazine. His lectures use down to earth easy to understand language in explaining techniques.

Another Great Courses DVD is *The Art of Travel Photography: Six Expert Lessons* by Joel Sartore. Lesson include Getting beyond the postcard, Light – Early, Late and in between plus 4 others. Much of this volume teaches methods of working in less than perfect light to make outstanding images.

The Great Courses cover a multitude of topics including Economics, History, Science, Math, Language, etc.

Website: [www.thegreatcourses.com](http://www.thegreatcourses.com)

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### **Words of Wisdom**

“If you want to be a better photographer, stand in front of more interesting stuff”

-Jim Richardson, Photographer, National Geographic

## A comparison of the new Full Frame Flagship Cameras by Nikon and Canon

	<b>Canon 1Dx II</b>	<b>Nikon D5</b>
sensor size	Not known yet	35.9 x 23.9
pixels	5472 x 3648	5568 x 3712
crops	full frame, APS	full frame, 1.3x, DX, 5:4
still file formats	JPG, CRW	JPG, TIF, NEF
ISO range	200-51200 (expandable to 50, 409600)	100-102400 (expandable to 50, 3280000)
card slots	1 Cfast, 1 CompactFlash	2 XQD or 2 CompactFlash (there are 2 modles)
frame rates	14 fps up to 170 raw (16 fps mirror lockup)	12 fps up to 200 raw (14 fps mirror lockup)
viewfinder	0.76x mag, 20mm eyepoint, -3 to +1 diopter	0.72x mag, 17mm eyepoint, -3 to +1 diopter
LCD	3.2" 1.62m dot touchscreen	3.2" 2.36m dot touchscreen
meter	360k pixel RGB+IR (0-20EV)	180k pixel RGB (-3-20EV)
autofocus	61 points (61 selectable, 41 cross, -3EV)	153 points (53 selectable, 99 cross, -4EV)
shutter	30s to 1/8000, 1/250 sync, 400k tested	30s to 1/8000, 1/250 sync, 400k tested
other	GPS built in	GPS via optional attachment
video formats	MotionJPEG, MOV	MOV
HD	1080P/120/60/50/30/25/24	1080P/60/50/30/25/24
4K	4K/60/50/30/25/24 (30 minutes), 1.33x crop	UHD/30/25/24 (3 minutes), 1.6x crop
weight	1530g	1415g
price	US\$5999	US\$6499
announced	Feb 2, 2016	Jan 5, 2016