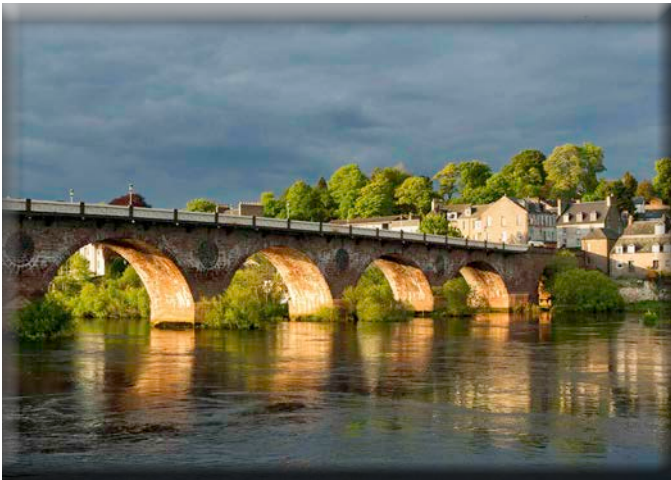


# Stockton Camera Club

## The Shutter Tripper

August 2018

### July Digital Images of the Month



#### Perth Bridge

Class A Image of the Month - Lanny Brown

#### Taking to the Skies

Class AA Image of the Month - Christine Blue



#### Hawaii's Cannon Ball Flower

Class AAA Image of the Month - Joanne Sogsti



# July Print Images of the Month

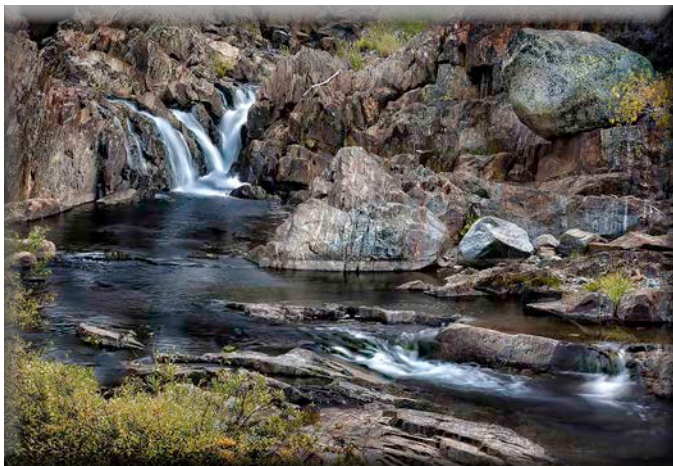


**Gerbera #127**

Class A Print of the Month - Wayne Carlson

**Passion Flower**

Class AA Print of the Month - Paul Chapman

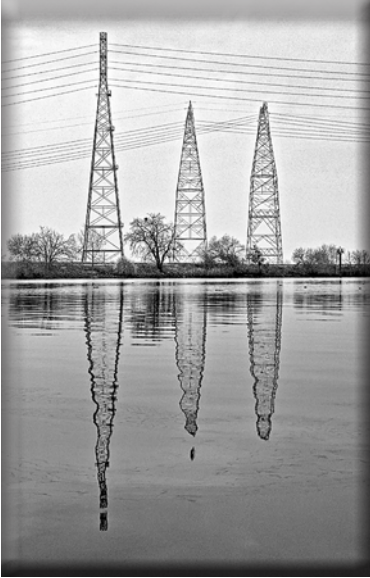


**Old Rocks and New Water**

Class AAA Print of the Month - Trey Steinhart



# July 10's of the Month



**3 Sentries**  
Trey Steinhart



**St Peters Cathredial**  
Sharon McLemore



**Among the Leaves**  
Elizabeth Parrish



**Vintage Chevy Truck in  
Crystal Ball**  
Joanne Sogsti



**Tomales Bay**  
Em McLaren





**Pin Cushion Protea  
or an Alien Life Form**  
Trey Steinhart



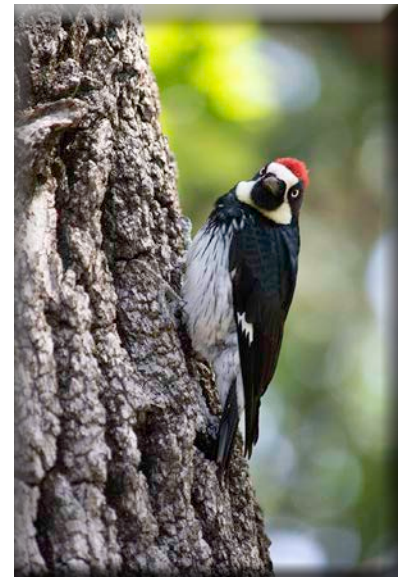
**Heart of the Marigold**  
Elizabeth Parrish



**Kennedy Mine Tower**  
Em McLaren



**Landing Osprey**  
Mac McChormic



**Woodpecker  
at Micke Grove**  
Wayne Carlson





**Splish Splash...Making a Dash**  
Christine Blue



**I Love You Mom**  
Ron Wetherell



**Whimiscal Wishes or  
Garden of Weeds**  
Christine Blue



**San Jose Sikh Temple**  
Dean Taylor

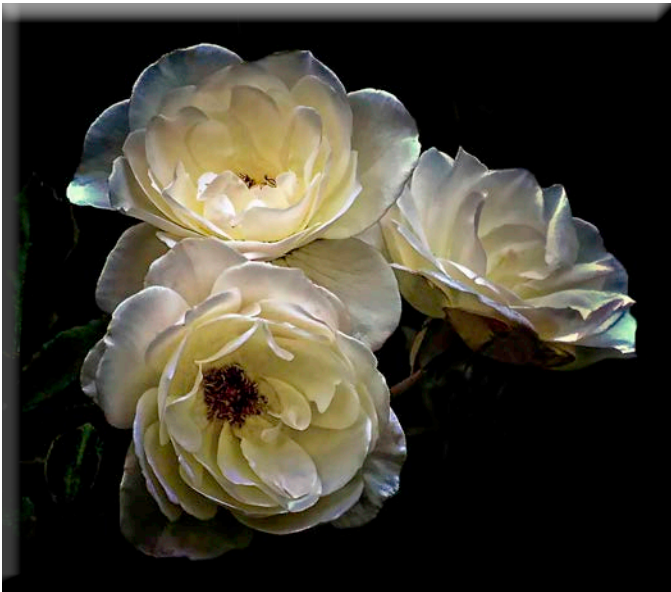


**Prelude to a 5' Storm**  
Trey Steinhart



**Gerbera #457**  
Wayne Carlson





**Old Fashion Roses**  
Em McLaren



**Great Horned Owl with Owlet**  
Joanne Sogsti



**Rusted Bolt**  
Em McLaren



**A Rose**  
Em McLaren





**Grizzly Bear Running in Water**  
Sharon McLemore



**Pine Nut Stud Colt**  
Ron Wetherell



**Tombstone**  
Joanne Sogsti



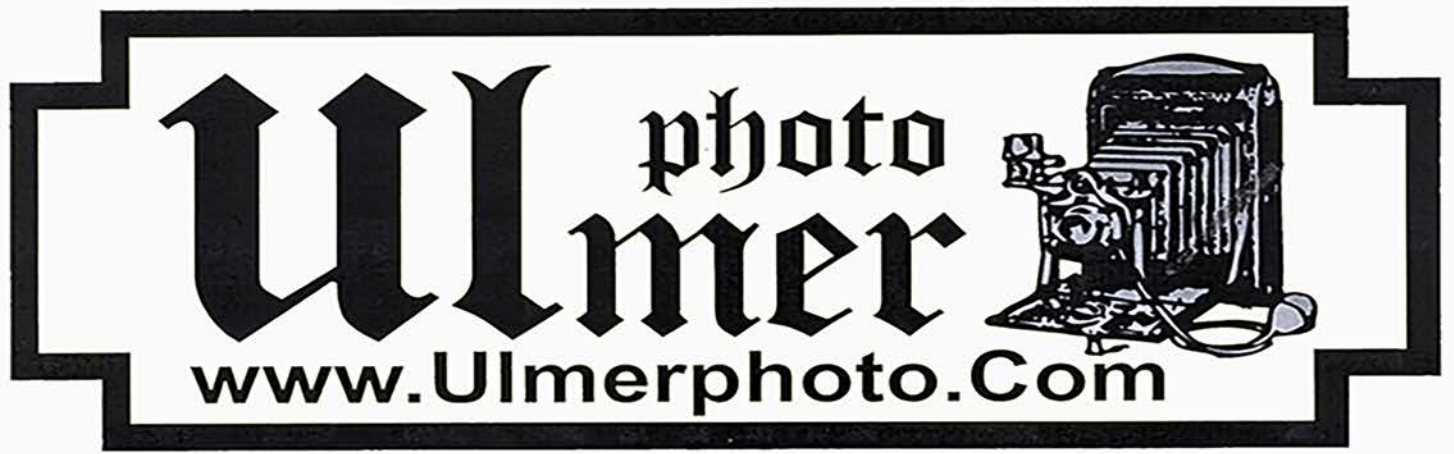
**Tulip Ballet**  
Dean Taylor



**Osprey with Bass**  
Heide Stover



**The American Avocet**  
Paul Chapman



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## July Meeting Notes

Heide opened the meeting. Esther Perez ([w.ldpce@aol.com](mailto:w.ldpce@aol.com)) joined the club. Welcome! We also had 2 guests, Chris and Bren.

1. There will not be a competition meeting at the bowling alley in August. Instead the club will have a potluck at Trey's home in Stockton on August 23 at 6 PM. Heide will send out an e-mail with directions and would like to know what each member will be bringing for food dishes.

2. Chris DeRoo invited the club to participate in an event called "FOR ART'S SAKE". It will be held at a private residence in Morada. It will be Sept. 22 from 2:30-5:30 and tickets are \$30. The show is a fund raiser but if you show and sell your photography you do not have to buy a ticket. If you sell, they will take 30% of sales. Chris said there will also be art classes, wine tasting and a classic car show. You can call him for more info: 209-915-3208 or go to web site: [www.zlcstockton.org/art](http://www.zlcstockton.org/art)

3. Reminder that the deadline date to enter your photos for the Lodi Grape Festival is Aug. 17.

Dean introduced Bill Clough as our judge for this month. Bill was a long-time member and past president of the club. He currently has his own photo business and does a lot of traveling to photograph sports events, and many other types of events.

### PRINT WINNERS OF THE MONTH

Class A "Gerbera #127" by Wayne Carlson

Class AA "Passion Flower" by Paul Chapman

Class AAA "Old Rocks and New Water" by Trey Steinhart

### DIGITAL WINNERS OF THE MONTH

Class A "Perth Bridge" by Lonnie Brown

Class AA "Taking to The Skies" by Christine Blue

Class AAA "Hawaii Cannon Ball" by Joanne Sogsti

Congratulations to all the winners!

Please let me know if there are any corrections or additions to the notes.

Thanks, em



## SCC Officers 2017

### President

Heide Stover

Email: [h1stover@aol.com](mailto:h1stover@aol.com)

### Vice President Programs

Dean Taylor, 986-9848

Email: [ditaylor49@aol.com](mailto:ditaylor49@aol.com)

### Vice President Competition

Sharon McLemore, 401-0192

Email: [sfmsap@aol.com](mailto:sfmsap@aol.com)

### Secretary

Em McLaren, 823-7287

Email: [emmclaren@comcast.net](mailto:emmclaren@comcast.net)

### Treasurer

Susanne Nichols

Email: [66susnic@gmail.com](mailto:66susnic@gmail.com)

## Committee Chairs

### Hospitality Chairperson

Paul Chapman

Email: [uscgchappy@yahoo.com](mailto:uscgchappy@yahoo.com)

### Print Competition Chairperson

Trey Steinhart 471-8438

Email: [Steinhart4@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Steinhart4@sbcglobal.net)

### Refreshments Chairperson

Sheldon McCormick 931-0461

Email: [smccormick11@hotmail.com](mailto:smccormick11@hotmail.com)

### Shutter Tripper/Educational

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Email: [doug\\_flyfisher@yahoo.com](mailto:doug_flyfisher@yahoo.com)

### Web Master

Janelle DeRuosi, 838-1881

Email: [jderuosiphotography@gmail.com](mailto:jderuosiphotography@gmail.com)

## President's Message

August 2018

By Heide Stover

Our last meeting was probably more of a fun causal meeting than a regular meeting. Former member Bill Clough was our judge and gave everyone good scores careful not to hurt anyone's feelings. He stepped in to help when our scheduled judge ended up in the hospital. It was a very last-minute thing and we would not have been able to get anyone else so he helped us immensely.

August is our potluck month and all of you should have gotten the email from me with date and time and RSVP information. Please make sure you get back to me. Last year we had 20 people at the potluck. Would be great to see a good turn out again. The pot lucks always turn out well and are a lot of fun. And with a break from the routine you have a little more time to get ready for September's competition.

I am planning ahead on this but would like members to think about it. Any of you that are interested in a position on the board please let me know.

Happy Shooting

## A Big Thank You to Our Sponsors!



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(On the Miracle Mile Across From The Valley Brew)

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# 2018 Competition Policy

## A. GENERAL RULES

1. Only paid-up members may enter club competition.
2. Regular print and digital image competition period: Once each month except January. A competition year is February through December. Current regular meetings are February, March, May, July, September, October and December. The number of meetings may change from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Directors and approval of the general membership as facilities permit. The Annual Awards Dinner will be held in January.
3. A total of four (4) images (all prints, all digital or a combination of both) may be entered each competition month. A total of three (3) images may be entered in the Open Division and a total of one (1) in the Special Subject Division. The number of entries may change from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Directors and the approval of the general membership.
4. Each image will be scored from 6 to 10 points. All prints or digital images receiving 9 or 10 points will be classed as an honor image. The title of each print or digital image entered will be read before being evaluated. The name of the maker will be read for 9-point honor winners. Maker's names will be announced for the 10 point images after the Print & Digital Image-of-the-Month winners are chosen.
5. A print or digital image that does not receive an honor score, may be re-entered one more time in the same division.
6. A print or digital image may be entered in all divisions for which it qualifies; i.e., an honor image in Open may also be entered in the Special Subject Division at another competition. A print or digital image that receives an honor score may not be re-entered in the same division.
7. Any print or digital image that appears to be ineligible for competition or not qualified for a specific division could expect to be challenged. The Competition Vice-President shall decide whether or not the image is acceptable.
8. The exhibitor must have exposed each negative, slide or digital image entered. All images submitted for judging must be the work of the photographer/maker including the taking of the images and any digital enhancements and/or manipulation of the image. This does not apply to the processing of film or printing by a commercial processor.
9. The same image should not be entered both as a print and a projected digital image in the same competition.
10. In the event of absence or barring unforeseen circumstances, a member may submit make-up prints or digital images for one competition night per competition year; and whenever possible must submit all make-up prints or digital images at the meeting immediately following the month a member failed or was unable to submit the prints or digital images. Make-ups in the Special Subject Division must be the same subject as the month missed. Also, in case of absence a member may assign the responsibility of submitting his or her prints and/or digital images for competition to another member.
11. A club member who serves as judge cannot enter his or her own prints or digital images in the same competition. The judge's make-up prints or digital images can then be entered in another competition during that competition year. This is in addition to the once-a-year make-up provision already

allowed.

12. Prints or digital images may be projected/viewed briefly before the judging of each division if the judge indicates he/she would like a preview.

## B. PRINT ENTRY RULES

1. Each print entered must have a completed label attached to the back of the print including; name of maker, title, date entered and Division (Open or Special Subject). The writing or printing on the form must be legible. Labels must be attached on the back of the print in the upper left-hand corner for correct viewing of the print.
2. All prints must be matted or mounted with a total size (including mat board) of no larger than 18" X 24" and no smaller than 8" X 10". Exception: One side of a Panorama Print may be no larger than 36". Prints that are smaller than 5" X 7" will not be accepted. The maker's name must not appear on the viewing surface of the image. Framed prints shall not be entered.
3. Prints accompanied by entry forms should be submitted no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the regular monthly meeting.
4. Prints receiving a score of 10 points, in each class, will be regrouped and judged for selection for the Print-of-the-Month honors. Print-of-the-Month honors will be given in Class A, AA & AAA.

## C. DIGITAL IMAGE ENTRY RULES

1. Digital images must be submitted in a format and by the deadline specified by the Competition Vice-President. Digital images may be submitted by email, mailed (CD) or delivered (CD) to the Competition Vice-President. Definition of Digital Image: An image taken with a digital camera, a negative, slide or print scanned into the computer and processed digitally.
2. Images must be in a format compatible with the projector. The key thing to keep in mind when formatting photos for submission is that the projector we use in the competition has a (maximum) resolution of 1400 x 1050 pixels. This means that any photo that exceeds this size in either dimension, could end-up being cropped by the projector. In other words: the image width cannot be more than 1400 pixels and the image height cannot be more than 1050 pixels. If your image is horizontal, only change the width to 1400, if your image is vertical, only change the height to 1050. Do not change both. Down-sizing the image from the "native" resolution coming out of your camera also significantly reduces the file size. This helps when emailing the files and takes-up less space on our hard-drives.
3. The maker's name, title of image, date entered and division (Open or Special Subject) must be included as the title of the image. When you have finished re-sizing your image save your image with a new title. For example do a Save as: Smith Sunrise Splendor 05-15 O.jpeg. (O-Open or SS-Special Subject). Specify whether you're Beginner, Advanced or Very Advanced.
4. Digital Images receiving a score of 10 points, in each class, will be regrouped and judged for selection for the Digital Image-of-the-Month honors. Digital Image-of-the-Month honors will be given in Class A, AA & AAA.



**Stockton Camera Club  
July 2018 Competition Standing**

William Clough, a professional photograph and former president to the club, viewed 56 prints and digital images for a average score of 9.86.

**Print of the Month Class A – Gerbera #127 by Wayne Carlson**

**Print of the Month Class AA – Passion Flower - by Paul Chapman**

**Print of the Month Class AAA – Old Rocks and New Water by Trey Steinhart**

**Digital image of the Month Class A – Perth Bridge by Lanny Brown**

**Digital Image of the Month Class AA – Taking to Flight by Christine Blue**

**Digital Image of the Month Class AAA – Hawaii’s Canonball Flower by Joanne Sogsti**

Please check out the website, <http://www.stockton-cameraclub.com/home.html>

<b>Class A Standings</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>FEB</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUN</b>	<b>JULY</b>	<b>SEPT</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>NOV</b>	<b>DEC</b>
Wayne Carlson	189	149	40	37	39	39	35	39	0	0	0	0
Sheldon McCormick	184	148	36	36	35	38	38	37	0	0	0	0
Jim Cahill	90	80	10	25	0	38	27	0	0	0	0	0
Ron Wetherell	75	75	0	27	0	19	0	29	0	0	0	0
Lanny Brown	56	36	20	0	10	18	18	10	0	0	0	0
Monica Hoeft	26	26	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gary Brown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Class AA Standing</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>FEB</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUN</b>	<b>JULY</b>	<b>SEPT</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>NOV</b>	<b>DEC</b>
Em McLaren	192	86	29	39	38	38	38	39	0	0	0	0
Heide Stover	189	151	38	39	39	37	37	37	0	0	0	0
Elizabeth Parrish	183	147	36	36	34	38	37	38	0	0	0	0
Paul Chapman	179	141	38	34	37	36	34	38	0	0	0	0
Christine Blue	153	115	38	37	39	38	0	39	0	0	0	0
Richard Bullard	111	93	18	0	37	36	38	0	0	0	0	0
Stan Sogsti	37	28	9	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ed Richter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Class AAA Standing</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>OPEN</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>FEB</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUN</b>	<b>JULY</b>	<b>SEPT</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>DEC</b>
Dean Taylor	194	156	38	39	39	39	39	38	0	0	0	0
Joanne Sogsti	194	155	39	39	37	39	39	40	0	0	0	0
Sharon McLemore	191	153	38	38	39	39	37	38	0	0	0	0
Trey Steinhart	151	115	36	37	37	37	0	40	0	0	0	0
Doug Ridgway	78	58	20	39	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Susanne Nichols	40	20	20	0	20	20	0	0	0	0	0	0

## 2018 Calendar of Events

Every 3rd Thursday (Except April, June & Aug) 6:30 PM	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	Membership Meeting Contact Heide Stover <a href="mailto:h1stover@aol.com">h1stover@aol.com</a>
Thursday August 16	Trey Steinhart's Home	Annual Pot Luck
Thursday September 20	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	September General Meeting Special Subject - Agriculture
Thursday October 18	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	October General Meeting Special Subject - Black & White/Monochrome
Wednesday October 24	South Parking Lot Woodbridge (Isenberg) Ecological Preserve	Sandhill Crane Photo Opportunity 4:30 - Dark
Thursday November 15	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	November General Meeting Prints only with no special subject
Thursday December 20	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	December General Meeting Special Subject - Before (Unprocessed) And After (Processed) Photo

## 2019 Calendar of Events

Thursday January 17	TBA	Annual Banquet
Thursday February 21	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	February General Meeting Special Subject - Guilty Pleasure
Thursday March 21	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	March General Meeting Special Subject - Focus On One Color
April	TBA	April Workshop/Photo Opportunity
Thursday May 16	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	May General Meeting Special Subject - Backlit
Thursday June 20	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	June General Meeting Prints only with no special subject
Thursday July 18	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	July General Meeting Special Subject - Gates/Fences





Petrified Wood. To photograph a small, intricately patterned section of a polished piece of petrified wood at 5x magnification, Lepp applied the techniques of cross-polarization and focus stacking. The result is a richly colored and detailed rendition of a complex subject. Canon EOS 5DS R with Canon MP-E 65mm f/2.8 1-5x Macro lens and Canon Macro Twin Lite MT-24EX. Exposure: 1/180 sec., f/4, ISO 125.  
Reflecting On Reflections

*When I photograph small, shiny nature subjects such as minerals, bugs and reptiles, I need to use flashes, but I can't seem to eliminate the reflections. Do you have any suggestions about minimizing light flares that get in the way of the details I'm trying to show? –T. Ambrose Rochester, New York*

**Specular highlights**—the bright spots of light that appear on shiny, irregular-shaped, illuminated objects—are a real obstacle in close-up photography. The required light sources may be larger than the subject itself, exacerbating the highlight problem. The answer to this dilemma is a technique called cross-polarization, which reduces the number of angles from which light rays can enter the lens.

Cross-polarization is accomplished by placing a polarizing filter on the lens and covering each light source (usually flashes) with plastic polarizing material cut from a sheet. Using the guide on the sheet, position the material on the flash; if more than one light source is used, be sure to orient the material identically on each. You can test the cross-polarization by positioning the flash(es) as you will be using them to illuminate the subject, then rotating the lens filter in front of one of the flashes. When the material on the flash goes black (that is, you can't see any light coming through the combination), cross-polarization has been achieved. In that position, mark the filter at 12 o'clock and remount the filter on the lens with the mark at 12 o'clock. This makes the effect repeatable without a whole new set of tests.

That's the good part. The problem is that this technique eliminates approximately five stops of light—and you really need light when working close up. I typically use two flash heads of reasonable size (larger hot-shoe type) on a bracket to position the flashes at an angle to the subject of approximately 45 degrees so they both are in the same orientation. Smaller macro flash units can be used if the subject is small and the flashes are positioned close to it. TTL flash mode should give a reasonable exposure calculation, but you might need to make some adjustments. It is important that all of the light recording on the capture comes from the polarized flash heads and not from the ambient light, which is not polarized.

Linear polarizing material of significant thickness and quality are available from the sources listed below. One sheet will last you a lifetime.

[Polarization.com](#). You want their “Linear Polarizer by the foot fully laminated” product at \$35 per foot. These are 17 inches wide; 1 foot is all you need.

[Edmund Optics](#). The 3.25-inch Diameter Gray Polarizing Film comes in a two-sheet pack for \$29. Contact: [edmundoptics.com/optics/polarizers/linear-polarizers/visible-linear-polarizing-film](#).

## Are Tripods Obsolete?

*Dynamic range and ISO range are improving with each new camera from the various manufacturers. Do you think that trend will eventually lead to tripods becoming an obsolete accessory for outdoor photographers? –H. Bryant Fresno, California*

Fast shutter speeds and tripods have a common objective: limiting the softening effect that unwanted motion and vibration have on our images. Advances in digital sensors that improve dynamic range (light-to-dark tonal values) and ISO capability (sensitivity to light) enable high-quality exposures of short duration—a real boon for hand-held capture of action subjects in the field, even in marginal light. The result is the ability to increase shutter speeds, depth of field, and obtain good detail in shadow areas. I'm using these advantages while photographing flying birds and other fast-moving wildlife subjects in situations where employing a tripod has never been very practical. The difference is that now, with the advancing sensor technology, hand-held results are consistently better and the percentage of successful captures is greatly improved.

However, I'm not throwing away my tripods just yet. One of the main advantages of using a tripod is that it allows for deliberate, thoughtful composition and capture strategies. I always use a tripod for both landscapes and close-up work. As long as I'm pushing the limits, as in photographing the night sky, I'll be making long exposures. When focus stacking for extended depth of field, an exactly matching orientation must be maintained from frame to frame throughout a set of captures, and that means using a tripod, even in my studio. And then there are the supports needed for capturing time-lapses and rock-steady video. I think I'll be using my tripods for quite some time to come.

## Safety Filter

*I know it's best to minimize filters on lenses, but the UV filter I use really paid off when I dropped my camera on a rock while hiking in the wash behind my house. The camera and lens survived fine, but the filter cracked all to pieces. –V. Ramakka via the internet*

While I've repeatedly admonished against the routine use of filters due to their degradation of images, I do recommend that a clear, UV or skylight filter be placed on lenses to protect them when photographing in difficult or dangerous environments, for just the reasons you mention. It's a trade-off between achieving the best sharpness possible and perhaps saving the lens altogether. So when the wind is blowing sand, or salt water is splashing on the equipment, or I'm in unstable or constrained circumstances, I'll add the safety filter.

Keep in mind that stacking filters exacerbates the loss of clarity, so if you want to add a polarizing filter, ND filter or any other filter, take off the UV/skylight filter. And I caution against adding polarizing filters to lenses of 200mm and longer, because they can affect the focus point of the lens and greatly compromise sharpness. This is especially evident with variable ND filters that actually consist of two polarizers working to cut back exposure. Check these combos out before you get into the field to determine if your longer-focal-length lenses are adversely affected by your filters.

## Choosing A Macro Lens

*I'm thinking of purchasing a macro lens. There are a lot of choices, ranging from 30mm to 180mm. My question is, if I were to photograph a flower with depth, like a lily, would a 30mm lens or a 180mm lens give better depth of field, assuming you filled the frame identically with the flower and used the same f/stop? –T. Freeburg via the internet*

The main factor you need to consider when choosing a macro lens is whether you will be using it on a camera with a full-frame sensor, an APS sensor (1.6x or 1.5x crop factor), or a smaller sensor, such as the Micro Four Thirds system (2x crop factor).

The smaller sensors will extend the apparent reach of any lens as a result of the crop factor. A 30mm macro lens on a Micro Four Thirds system camera, for example, will be the equivalent of a 60mm macro lens on a full-frame camera. The difference you'd see between the 30mm macro on an MFT camera and a 180mm macro on a full-frame camera would be significant. The perspective of the 30mm lens versus a 180mm lens would be different, as the telephoto lens (macro or otherwise) would give a much flatter rendition due to compression of the composition. In addition, the 30mm macro would have less working distance from the subject than a lens of longer focal length.

While the depth of field would be nearly identical for two lenses of different focal lengths if the framing and aperture were the same, the overall look of the subject will be different because of the perspective. I do occasionally use a wide-angle lens with a small amount of extension tube attached to facilitate close focusing to give that different perspective, but the idea isn't to use the lens as a macro optic.

My choice for an all-around macro lens for full-frame cameras is a 100mm macro, or its equivalent for other format sensors. It has great sharpness and a reasonable working distance for general macro work and also for focus stacking on subjects to life-sized. I also have a 180mm macro and the Canon MP-E 65mm f/2.8 1-5x Macro. Each has its place, with advantages for particular projects.



## Travel Kits

*My wife and I are going to Hawai'i for our 55th anniversary and I'm trying to pack my camera gear with the optimum set of lenses to reduce weight. I want to take my Canon EOS 5D Mark IV and my Canon PowerShot SX60 HS (mainly for the long reach). I have a good variety of lenses. What would you suggest as the best combination to cover a wide range of photographic situations? –J. Lugiano via the internet*

If your spouse is not also a photographer, traveling light and focusing on the celebration might improve your chances for a 56th anniversary trip!

The answer to your question depends on what you plan to photograph, how much weight you're willing to carry, and what you plan to do with the images you capture in Hawai'i. If you market them outside of social media, or if you are planning to make large prints, you'll want to take the EOS 5D Mark IV, the sharpest of your lenses, and a wide range of focal lengths. If you're going to post the images on the internet, make small prints or share them via social media, the lighter SX60 will do the trick. Something in between would be the Mark IV with a wide-to-telephoto zoom such as a 28-300mm. Don't forget to pack a lightweight tripod for long exposures, time lapse and video. Aloha!



[George Lepp](#)



One of North America's best-known contemporary outdoor and nature photographers and a leader in the field of digital imaging and photographic education, Lepp is the author of many books and the field editor of *Outdoor Photographer* magazine. One of Canon's original Explorers of Light, Lepp finds inspiration in advancing technology that fuels creative innovation and expression of his life-long fascination with the natural world.



Photograph by Jodi Cobb

Each place we visit has its own particular look, character, and ambiance. If we want photographs of our travels to be good and lasting, they should capture all of these qualities, and say as much about a place as give the literal look of it.

We are unlikely to long remember the smell and buzz of a flower garden in spring, the awe of gazing for the first time at the mountain we intend to climb, the caress of a tropical breeze, the thrill of a huge roller coaster, the wonder of our first wild bear, or the adrenaline of rafting white water. Our photographs need to bring these and other sensations back, to trigger our memories, and to communicate how we felt to others. To do this, we need to think and feel as much as look when setting out to make photographs.

First and foremost, think about what made you decide, out of all the places in the world, to choose this particular destination. Whatever it is—the beach, the rides, the mountain, the galleries, the food—obviously appeals to

you. If it didn't, you wouldn't be going there. That site or activity (or inactivity) is one of the things you want to photograph. But there are probably many other interesting aspects of the place you may not be aware of. That's where research comes in.

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Photographers for National Geographic spend a lot of time doing research. This helps us figure out what's there—what the place is about and what subjects we need to cover. Read brochures and travel books. Go to libraries, bookstores, or onto the Web. Talk to friends who have been there. Pick up travel information at the country's embassy. Find whatever you can that is relevant, and devour it.

Understanding the customs and traditions of a place is vital. For one thing, you want to be sure you act in a way that is not rude or offensive while you are there, and it's hard to know what's acceptable and what isn't with some knowledge. It can also help you understand things people do that at first encounter you might consider incomprehensible or even horrifying.

### Today's Popular Stories

When you arrive at your destination, be open and try to take note of the first impressions—write them down if you have to. (A notebook is an essential accessory for a travel photographer.) When you see a place for the first time from the plane window, or when you drive around a bend and there it is, or as the ship nears some distant island—how do you feel? Where do your eyes go first? What do you notice about the place right away? A smell? The heat or cold? Blistering sunlight? Mysterious fog? A particular building or vista? The way people move? Their dress? Whatever it is, remember it. First impressions are invaluable sparks to creative interpretation, and by definition are not repeatable. You've seen the place in pictures, you've read about it. Now you're there, and all your senses can partake.

Get out there. The only way to discover the rhythm of life in a place, and so figure out what to shoot, is to experience it. Many places, particularly hot ones, are active very early in the morning and late in the afternoon but rather in a lull around midday. Get up early, stay out late. If you are on a tour that is scheduled to leave the hotel or ship at 9:00, get up well before dawn. Wander around before meeting up with your companions. If the tour goes back to the hotel or ship for lunch, don't go with them. Rather than take the bus back at the end of an afternoon tour, hang around until after sunset and then take a taxi. Use any spare time to get out and look for photographs. Besides availing yourself of more opportunities, time spent discovering the place will enrich your experience.

Get lost. Wander down alleys. Sit in cafés and watch life pass by. Don't eat where the tourists do, but where you see locals. Just set off down a street and see where it leads. Look around the bends, over the rises. Get away from the crowd. I find that if I meander away from the tourists and tourist sites, away from what is too familiar and comfortable, it's much easier to adapt to the rhythm of a place, and to be more observant.

Always have your camera with you and always keep your eyes open. Serendipity plays an enormously important role in travel photography. You never know what you are going to run into, and you have to be ready. Many times, you will see what could be



a good photograph but decide that the light is not right, or there are no people around, or too many—something that means you will have to come back later. But sometimes you get lucky. You happen to stumble upon a scene at just the right moment. If you forgot your camera, are out of film, or your digital card is full, if you have to fumble around getting the right lens on, the moment may be gone before you can recover. This is true whether you are doing street photography or visiting a natural or man-made site. Mountains, trees, monuments, and other static subjects are, of course, not going to go anywhere, but the ray of sunshine, the soaring eagle, or the embracing couple that add the needed element to your photograph are unlikely to hang around. Think of it as hunting—whenever you leave the confines of your camp, you should be ready and able to capture whatever pops up.

Make time for photography. Like doing anything well, making good photographs requires a commitment of time and energy. One problem with much of modern travel is that the days are chockablock full of scheduled tours, events, and meals. Our trips are usually of limited time, and we naturally want to see as many sites as possible. The itineraries rarely leave room for serious photography. You have to make time. It may help to make photography a scheduled part of every day, so you know you have the time and won't be tempted to get lazy and say, "I'll do it tomorrow." It might rain tomorrow. Don't procrastinate.

When traveling, you're likely to encounter all sorts of situations and subjects. This requires being a bit of a jack-of-all-trades—you need to be able to photograph portraits, landscapes, and everything in between.

Above all, work the situations over. Never be satisfied with your first view of a place or the first frame you snap. It's always possible—and usually likely—that you can come up with something better. Why else would painters make sketches? Get closer, then get closer still. Try different angles, different lenses. Wait for the light, wait for the crowd, wait for a bird to land on the tree branch. Never be in a hurry to get somewhere else. Tell yourself that nothing is more important than getting the best you can get out of the situation you are in. Once you've exhausted every possibility you can think of, you can start working on the next one.

### Landscapes

Landscapes come in all forms—mountains, forests, plains, deserts, swamps, lakes, rivers, seacoasts. Each has its own characteristics, and individual sites within each category have their own too. The Grand Tetons do not look like the Andes—the Nile River is different from the Mississippi.

Whatever kind of landscape you are shooting, think about what the essential qualities are—and not just the visual ones; think about how the place makes you feel, what kind of emotions it stirs in you. Then look for ways to get those qualities and feelings onto film. Is it a rocky, violently wave-washed coast or a bright and sandy one? If it's the former, you want to show waves crashing against the shore, probably in stormy weather. Blue sky and sunlight are more appropriate for the latter unless you want to show the desolation of a resort beach in winter.

### Cities and Towns

Like landscapes, each city and town has its own look and feel—a distinctive setting, architecture, or skyline; a famous local site; a particular kind of food or dress. There's always at least one thing that is unique. When covering a town or city, even a small village, you need to do three basic things at a minimum: capture a sense of place, which is usually a wide shot that shows the setting, skyline, or other view that gives a feeling for the whole; landmarks that the place is famous for; the life of its inhabitants. For the cityscapes and wide shots, as well as for the landmarks, it's a good idea to check out the postcard racks in your hotel lobby or at kiosks. They will quickly give you an idea of where the best views are and what is considered well-known enough to warrant a postcard.

### Monuments and Other Buildings

When you are photographing buildings, statues, or other monuments, think about what they represent before you shoot. For example: There's a large statue of Vulcan outside Birmingham, Alabama. You could make a perfectly nice image of him standing on his hill on a sunny day, but such a picture would not say a lot about who Vulcan is. A photograph on a stormy evening, with perhaps lightning in the background, would. Cannons on a historic battlefield might look better in fog than in bright sunlight. Get the idea of the subject, then think of the weather, light, angle, etc. that best communicates it.

### Photographing Family Members and Friends

We often travel with people we know—taking a family vacation, for example, or bicycling around Tuscany with a group of friends. We quite naturally want to come home with pictures of them as souvenirs of the trip. Be sure to get these, but don't forget that you can also use members of your family and your friends to make your other photographs more effective.

When you are making pictures of your friends, try to strike a balance between a picture of them and a picture of the place. A friend of mine once made a close-up portrait of me in China. It wasn't a great portrait, but more important, it could have been made in my backyard—there was nothing of the place in the frame. Of course, you may want to shoot portraits, or to capture someone's expression at a particular moment, but often you are making the picture as a way of documenting your shared experience. You want to show enough of your friend to be able to recognize him—that vertical speck in the distance could be anybody. But you don't want to be so close that there's no context. If your friend is the primary subject, he has to be strong enough to draw attention and be recognizable but still keep some sense of where he is.

## **Photographing Strangers**

It's best to ask permission if you want to photograph someone, especially if you are working in close. Engage them before you pull out your camera. Learn at least how to say "hello" and "May I make a photograph" in the local language—just showing that you've made a little effort helps. Explain to them what you want to do and what it is about them that made you want to make a picture. If approached in an open and friendly manner, most people will be agreeable—many are flattered that someone has shown an interest in them and what they do. In places where there's a lot of tourism, you may run into people who are tired of being photographed—many tourists are not courteous enough to ask permission, and local people can come to feel abused and exploited. The only way to overcome this is to spend time with the people or to go to parts of the place less frequented by tourists.

In many tourist destinations, people may ask for money if you want to photograph them. Many of these places are desperately poor, and people have few ways of getting hold of cash. The money they ask for is usually not very much to us, but may represent quite a lot to them. How you deal with these situations is up to you, but remember that every time you buy a postcard, you are happy to spend the money for a picture somebody else took. Why not spend a little on your own?

You cannot always ask permission, of course. If you are shooting a street scene or a wide shot of a market, you can't run up to everyone and ask if it's OK. In general, people do not mind this sort of photography—it's only when they're singled out that they get uncomfortable. But not always. Be sensitive to the scene in your viewfinder. If people are getting nervous, ask permission or move on.

Make use of people to give your images life and scale. If the facade of a particular building appeals to you, the picture may be that much better if you show people walking in front of it. They will give it scale and also let viewers know what sorts of people live there, how they dress, and the like. An outdoor café may be more interesting crowded with people than empty.