



Stockton Camera Club

The Shutter Tripper

September 2020

September's
Special Subject
is Patterns

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President's Message

September 2020

By Heide Stover

I think those of us that attended the zoom meeting had a good time. It was interesting to see what members came up with for their 5-image story. I think they were all good and it was fun to see them and hear about them and not worry about a score. It is also a wonderful way to be able to socialize with each other. We had a fairly good turn out with 13 members joining the meeting.

Next month our meeting will be on the third Friday of the month instead of the third Thursday. So that makes our meeting Friday, September 18th at 6:30 pm. We will have a judge for that one.

PSA had me doing Zoom classes on Image Analysis. I was mentored by Jon Fishback, who started this program. Originally, I was supposed to do live meetings for camera clubs, traveling to where the club was. But with the virus, I have not been able to do that so they have me doing the class through Zoom instead.

The class is for camera clubs that are members of PSA. Stockton Camera Club is a member of PSA. I can only take up 8 people per class and the classes last about 2 hours. If anyone is interested in taking this class let me know and I will set something up. This teaches you how to look at and critic an image. It does not qualify you as a judge though it is a stepping stone in that direction. For those of you that are individual members of PSA, I recommend taking the online course. It goes into greater depth.

See you at the next zoom camera club meeting.

Heide

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2020 Calendar of Events

Every 3rd Thursday (Except April, June & Aug) 6:30 PM	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	Membership Meeting Contact Heide Stover h1stover@aol.com
Friday September 18	Submit to Wayne @ sccsubmit@gmail.com	September General Meeting Special Subject - Patterns
Thursday October 15	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	October General Meeting Special Subject - Monochrome
Thursday November 5	Lisa Langell Webinar	An Artistic Photographer Lies in All of Us Free Webinar 6:00pm - 7:30pm
Thursday November 19	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	November General Meeting Special Subject - Prints Only (No Special Subject)
Thursday December 17	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	December General Meeting Special Subject - On the Water

2021 Calendar of Events

January 21	TBA	Annual Banquet
Thursday February 18	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	February General Meeting Special Subject - Long Exposure
Thursday March 18	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	March General Meeting Special Subject - Fog
April	TBA	April Workshop/Photo Opportunity
Thursday May 20	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	May General Meeting Special Subject - Macro/Close-up
Thursday June 17	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	June General Meeting Special Subject - Prints Only (No Special Subject)
July 15	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	July General Meeting Special Subject - Creative

Meeting Notes August 2020

There were 13 participants at the meeting. 8 people entered the “Tell A Story in 10 Words”, with 5 images. There was no judging, just talking about the images.

Heide reminded everyone that the [Lisa Langell webinar](#) is scheduled for November 5 at 6:00pm - 7:30pm. She will send out a reminder as the time gets closer. You will need to register for it, but it will be free for our club.

The next camera club meeting will be a competition one in September. Heide needs to change the day to Friday, September 18 at 6:30 instead of our usual Thursday meeting (for September only.) So, mark your calendars. It will be a Zoom meeting only. Do not go to the bowling ally!

The SPECIAL SUBJECT for September is PATTERNS.

Please let me know if there are any changes or additions to the notes. Thanks, em

Stockton Camera Club
July 2020 Competition Standings
Congratulations to the winner!!!

Due to COVID-19 July's meeting was held via Zoom.

June DIGITAL OF THE MONTH WINNER - "Stay Away From My Girls" by Ron Wetherell

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

Class A Standings	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Joan Erreca	128	93	35	37	26	0	32	33	0	0	0	0
Ron Wetherell	103	86	17	28	0	0	38	37	0	0	0	0
Reginald Lee	26	26	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lanny Brown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Susanne Nichols	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charlene Martin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brenda DeRoos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adrian Ferreya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ricky Ortiz	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Albert Rivas	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jackie Berryessa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
David Wireback	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Class AA Standing	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Doug Ridgway	149	111	38	38	36	0	37	38	0	0	0	0
Wayne Carlson	145	107	38	38	35	0	33	39	0	0	0	0
Sheldon McCormick	138	102	36	37	35	0	33	33	0	0	0	0
Elizabeth Parrish	138	105	33	36	36	0	32	34	0	0	0	0
Christine Blue	107	81	26	38	0	0	32	37	0	0	0	0
Darrell O'Sullivan	70	53	17	36	0	0	34	0	0	0	0	0
Class AAA Standing	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEP	OCT	Nov	DEC
Dean Taylor	155	117	38	39	38	0	38	40	0	0	0	0
Trey Steinhart	153	113	40	40	39	0	35	39	0	0	0	0
Em McLaren	152	114	38	38	39	0	37	38	0	0	0	0
Heide Stover	151	113	38	38	39	0	36	38	0	0	0	0
Joanne Sogsti	149	111	38	38	38	0	36	37	0	0	0	0
Sharon McLemore	149	114	35	38	38	0	36	37	0	0	0	0

2020 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.

by [Jillian Bell](#)

Photographers tackle the nuance of depth of field all the time in macro photography. I often get asked, “Do you use focus stacking to help give dimension to an image?” I do... but not often. If we take a look at focus stacking in its simplest form, the reasons I choose to do so breaks down into 2 reasons.

Purpose or Inspiration.

“Purpose” is a bit utilitarian but becomes a useful tool when situational elements hinder photographic conditions. Here’s an example:

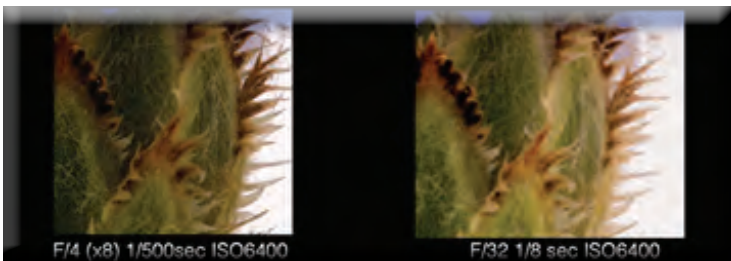


F/4 1/500sec ISO6400 (x8)

[Click image to view larger](#)

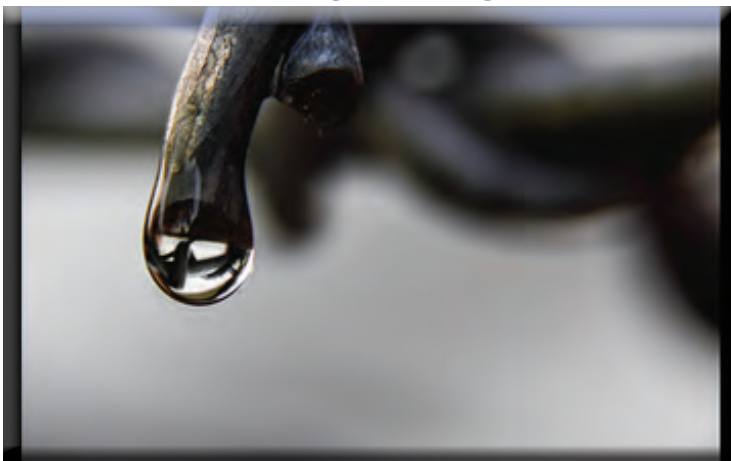
I was out in my garden taking photos of flowers. Dropping in this crisp, white background gave the image a more commercial look. Using my [SP 90mm F/2.8 Di VC USD Macro 1:1](#), I needed a hefty depth of field to fully wrap around the flower. The problem was, even with great midday light, at F/32 my shutter speed was too slow. The flower blew around just enough to affect its overall sharpness. I clamped it down... I blocked the breeze... It didn’t help.

Focus stacking was the solution in this case! I stacked 8 images at F/8 to achieve a faster shutter speed. Using manual focus, I started at the front and with each image, shifted my focus point slightly further back. Other added benefits to stacking in this case is an added overall clarity and image sharpness.



[Click image to view larger](#)

Take a look at the closeup below; notice the slight pixel diffraction? Even at ISO 6400, a smaller aperture and faster shutter speed was needed to achieve the best clarity for this image.



F/2.8 1/20sec ISO400 (x2)

[Click image to view larger](#)

In contrast, “Inspiration” starts with an artistic concept. In many of my photographs, I blend together shallow, non-distracting backgrounds with sharp subject detail. I cannot achieve this look by simply closing down the aperture. I like using shallow depth of field in my macro imagery to isolate subjects and decrease distractions. This first image is a simple two-image stack. One focusing on the wire barb; the other, focusing on the water droplet reflection. The morning dew is never an issue with Tamron’s moisture resistant construction.



[Click image to view larger](#)



) F/2.8 1/4sec ISO125 (x4)
[Click image to view larger](#)

Here's another fun example. By isolating only the subjects in this little scene, I created a more realistic, life-sized appearance. Unsuspecting campers are about to get a surprise visitor to their campsite! Each photograph used in the stack focused on a different character in the scene. Taken at F/2.8 with my Tamron 35mm F/2.8 Di III M1:2, the close focusing capabilities were amazing! I chose this wider-angled focal length to aid in "real-life" perspective. The 35mm angle of view is a bit more environmental than the 90mm.

Helpful Tips: When creating your focus stacked photographs, use a tripod. Lining up each frame exactly is critical. Turn off any image stabilization. Use Manual Focus. Lastly, find a software that makes sense to you. There are many options. Photoshop, and now Lightroom has these capabilities. [Helicon Focus](#), [Affinity Focus](#), www.focusstacker.com are just a few others. The main idea is... have fun with it!

Check out more behind the scene and set up information posted on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). @BellTamronUSA

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Macro Photography: Sculpting & Shaping Light

By [Matthew Cicanese](#)

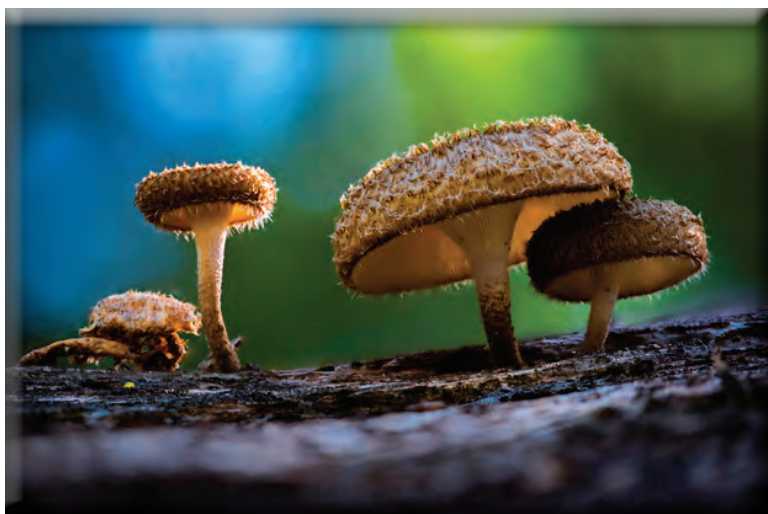
"Understanding how to sculpt and soften your light, and practicing it enough that it becomes second nature, is a cornerstone in becoming more proficient in your foundational skills as a macro photographer."



Perhaps one of the most challenging aspects of macro photography is lighting. Light is the essence of photography itself, and the way that the light falls on your scene (and subject) plays a critical role in capturing compelling images. Understanding how to sculpt and soften your light, and practicing it enough that it becomes second nature, is a cornerstone in becoming more proficient in your foundational skills as a macro photographer. This

article will outline the principles behind working with natural and artificial light (including Speedlites and LEDs), and enable you to approach your macro photography lighting with a newfound level of control.

A quick note about accessories & additional equipment mentioned in this article: While these additional accessories are what I find works well for me personally, there are many other options out there as well, and you should do your own research to determine what will work best for you.



SCULPTING & SHAPING NATURAL LIGHT

I believe that there is a certain quality to the right natural light that can't be replicated by people or machines. The magical light of dawn and dusk are natural light's "je ne sais quoi," and they only make up a small percent of your available time to shoot. When working with this type of natural light, you've got to be in the right place at the right time to potentially make the image you're hoping for. This can be a very challenging endeavor to achieve in many cases, because of the scarcity and rarity of this light. The dreamy, golden-hour light may only be around for less than 10% of the day if all the conditions are just right.

The other category of natural light dominates the day, and isn't typically desirable for macro photography. This harsh, stark sunlight can cause blown-out colors and highlights (in addition to extreme contrast). When you can't luck out with timing the magical light, this section will help you approach less than ideal situations in natural light, with confidence.

Now that we've reviewed some of the basic challenges of using natural light for macro photography, let's look at some ways to take control of it. Since we can't easily control the strength of the light source, our goal is to utilize tools that will allow us to control where that light goes (and how it spreads).



SOFTENING NATURAL LIGHT

Softening natural light can be accomplished in a variety of ways. The most effective way to achieve this is by using a scrim. A scrim is a lightweight, translucent material that allows light to pass through it. When this happens, the light is dispersed over a wider area and appears softer as a result. A scrim for a close-up of a small subject can be as simple as a paper towel or a sheet of printer paper. Most modern reflectors for photography ("5-in-1" reflectors) have a scrim or diffuser built-in. However, I've found that plain, white shower curtain liners accomplish the same thing, and take up a much smaller space in my pack when

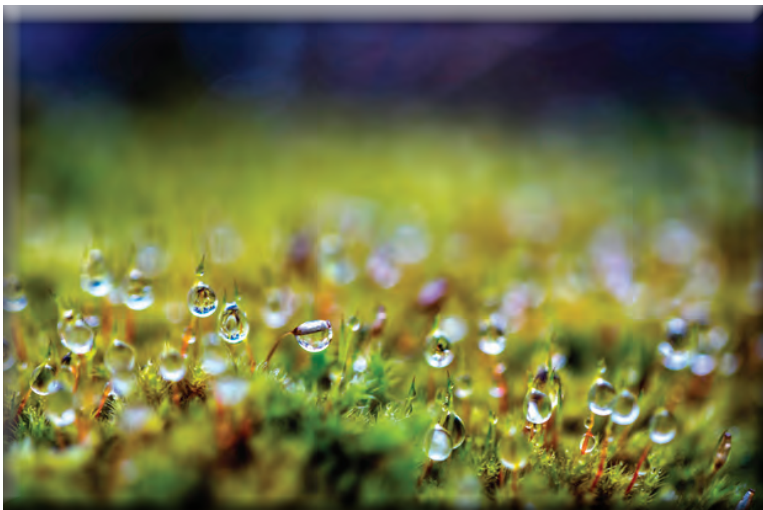
I'm on a fieldwork expedition. Because these are so cheap, I can pack a couple of spares in my suitcase for just a few bucks, and cut them up into different sizes for different situations. Another perk to using the shower liner is you can very easily control the amount of light that passes through, by adjusting the thickness of the material. For example: if I was shooting in the midday sun with a shower liner as a scrim, and a single layer wasn't softening the light enough, I could simply fold the scrim in half until I've reached the desired amount of diffusion. One challenge with using this method is getting the material to stay where you need it to. An alternative to this that has more rigidity would be a thin, plastic cutting board. Another good option would be a small white umbrella. The nice part about using an umbrella is that you can lean it directly on the ground and work underneath it, and if the weather turns bad you've also got a way to keep your gear dry!

Also keep in mind that often times, the environment itself can soften the natural light on overcast days. These cloudy days can be your best friend if you're trying to achieve a nice, even light from natural sources.

SHAPING NATURAL LIGHT

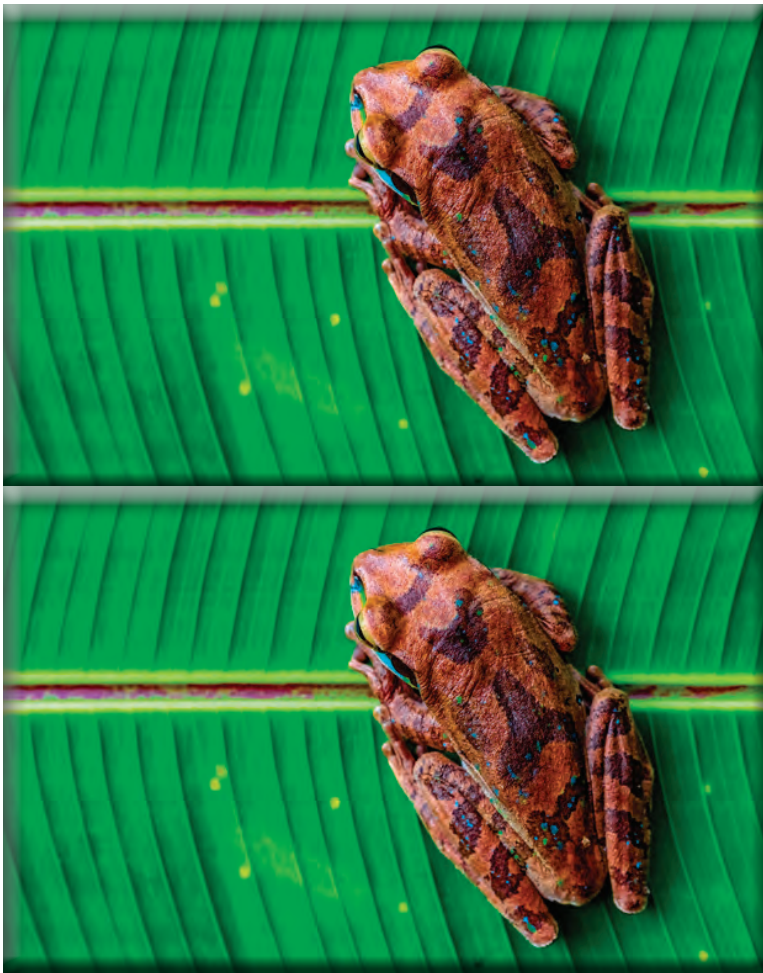
When it comes to shaping natural light, I turn to methods that allow me to bounce the light I'm working with onto my subject or scene. The easiest way to accomplish this is with a pre-made reflector. I like to keep a small pocket-sized reflector in my everyday kit; it's a silver/white 12-inch (0.3m) disc that folds up really small, and can help in many situations. These are relatively cheap, and are my go-to for bouncing light. However, when I was a student, I found ways to use household items to achieve the same effect. Some of the common things I have used to reflect light include aluminum foil, sunshades for car windshields, silver or gold crafting paper, and even shiny fabric! Whatever you have around the house or local general store, if it's shiny it will work!

Using tools like the ones above to control where your light lands on your scene is extremely beneficial when it comes to working with natural light. They allow you to illuminate parts of your scene that wouldn't otherwise be reached by available light. Let's take a look at this in action.



A small, white disc reflector helped bounce just enough natural light into these water drops on the moss. When combined with a wide aperture and cloudy day, the image resulted in even light and some extra glow to the water drops.





WORKING WITH ARTIFICIAL LIGHT

For my work, having absolute control over how light interacts with my scene and subjects is crucial. This means that a majority of the time, I'm working with artificial light. Having a consistent power output that is extremely controllable (and dependable) means less fussing around with getting my light just right. Lighting systems like the Canon Speedlite 600EX II-RT paired with a Canon ST-E3-RT Speedlite Transmitter can give you full control of your lighting without the need for wires or complicated setups. This type of kit setup is small, portable, and can get into places where natural light can't. I do a lot of work in dark forests, and using this style of lighting gives me the best of both worlds for control and outcome. When used correctly, you can mimic the look of natural light where it may otherwise never be present (such as a dark forest understory or the inside of a cave).

Another excellent source of artificial light for macro photography is constant (artificial) lighting. Constant lights are considered any light source that has a consistent (and constant) output onto your scene. They can be as simple as a flashlight, to a Bluetooth-controlled smart light that is color-corrected. Constant lights are great for seeing exactly how your scene will be illuminated, and in many cases allow for the most flexibility for sculpting your light in a scene. I personally use the Litra Pro — a 1200 lumen LED unit that is color-balanced, rugged, and waterproof. It's small enough to fit on a camera's accessory shoe, and has a built-in, rechargeable battery.

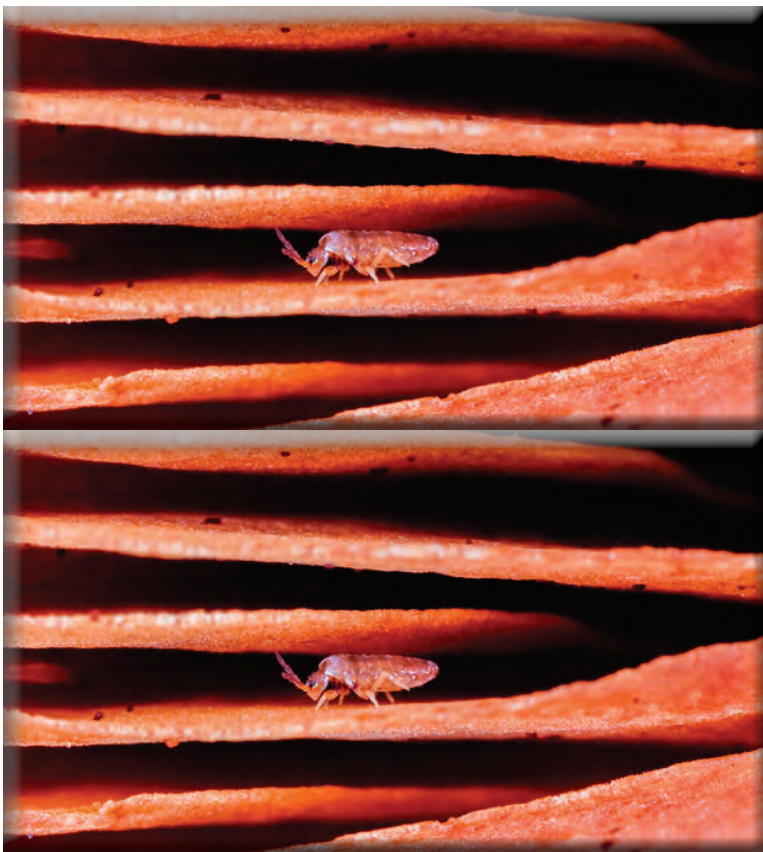
Let's have a look at how to utilize artificial light sources in macro photography, and how to transform an initially-harsh light into a smooth and desirable form...

SPEEDLITES

Speedlites offer a large variety of power, portability, and consistent light output. I always have at least a couple in my kit, along with a wireless triggering system. The benefits that this setup offers outweigh the limitations of battery-life and possible issues with weather sealing. Those limitations are fairly easy to overcome by carrying some extra batteries and plastic bags for inclement weather.

Diffusing the light that your flash produces is critical to achieving a soft, desirable light for your scene. Most Canon Speedlites have a built-in diffusion screen and bounce card, which can provide a small amount of extra control over how your light behaves. However, I recommend starting with a small softbox that attaches directly to your flash unit. These types of modifiers typically cost around \$20, and fold flat for easy storage when carrying them in your kit. They come in a variety of sizes and quality of materials, depending on the brand that you go with.

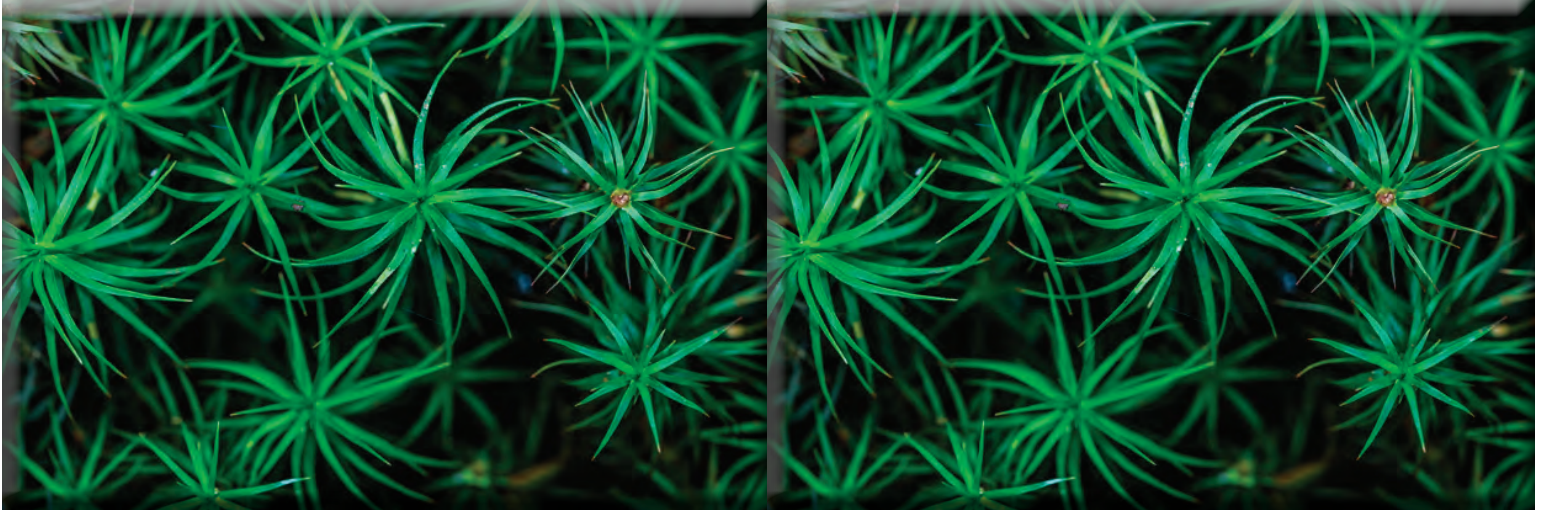
When I need to spread my light over a larger area than what a small softbox can offer, I utilize a larger softbox or reflective umbrella. These types of modifiers allow a much wider spread of light, and softer gradation of shadow over the subject. Conversely, if I want to concentrate my light



Diffused Speedlite sample image

into a particular area, I would use a honeycomb grid. This device acts as a way to narrow your flash into a single beam (versus a cone) and results in a spotlight effect. This can be great for highlighting one particular element or avoiding light spill into unwanted areas in your scene.

If you're looking for makeshift ways to achieve the same dynamics of your flash, there are lots of household items that can help you achieve similar effects. A white food storage container (like the plastic container that Chinese food often comes in) makes a great softbox in a pinch. Just cut a hole for your flash to fit through on the bottom, and place a paper towel on the underside of the lid. If you want to go bigger, try doing the same thing with a plastic dishwashing tub from a general store, or a styrofoam cooler for an even larger spread. Another DIY modifier for this type of light is a paper lantern, but I've found that this method is too fragile (as they break fairly easily, due to the thin paper).



Softbox-diffused artificial light sample



Softbox-diffused artificial light sample. Mixed with reflector-bounce.

LEDS

In macro photography, knowing where and how your light will interact with your scene allows you to make creative decisions that lead to the final image. Of all the light sources available for macro shooting, the source that provides the greatest amount of insight as to the dynamics of your light is a constant light source. Constant light sources (such as LED panels, designed for photography and video) are offered in a large variety of sizes, build qualities, and features (such as color temperature control).

Most ready-made products can include a variety of accessories to help control the characteristics of the light that the unit produces. Diffusion panels, grids, and color gels are the most common forms that these accessories come in. Tools like this are designed for photography and videography, and many are equipped with features that cater to these types of shooting (such as threaded mounting holes).

DIY solutions for constant light are fairly straightforward. The standard LED flashlight or headlamp are limitless in variety, and different designs result in different effects on your scene. Flashlights with a zoom focus are very versatile for adjusting the

characteristics of how the light spreads. You can use this like a spotlight (similar to a honeycomb grid). LED cob lights (“chip on board” LED lights, which typically are single color illumination) emit a very even, soft light (almost like a softbox). These are great for a wider spread and softer shadow gradation. Small pen lights are wonderful for getting light into very specific places, or for placing in areas where traditional lighting wouldn’t fit.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

No matter if you’re working with natural light or artificial light in macro photography, there’s always a unique solution to sculpt and shape your light for any situation.

I like to keep my light modifiers in their own little box or bag. It’s kind of a mishmash of go-to tools for a variety of situations. Try to always keep an open mind in thinking about ways to soften, shape, and sculpt the light for your subject. This can be an artform in itself, but your practice will pay off with stronger macro imagery as a result.

A note on ethics...

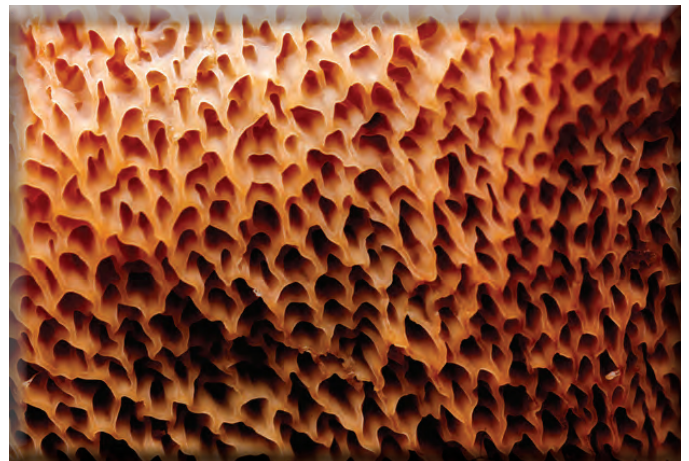
Remember to be courteous of all lifeforms, and respect their well-being. Don’t over-stress animals in order to get the shot you want, and don’t pick plants or other species that may be sensitive or endangered. Always show your subjects the best respect, and you will come out with the best images possible. All Canon contributors are compensated and actual users of Canon products promoted.



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Guide to Photographing Active Kids

By: [Jennifer Borget](#)



Every Parent's Challenge...

Like life, my son is all over the place. It's hard to get him to sit still, much less for a photo. Photographing active kids isn't easy, but I've learned a few tricks along the way and thought I'd share some so you can learn how to photograph kids in motion and make your active toddler (and even athletic teen) moments to cherish forever.



Take a Lot of Photos

A huge perk of digital photography these days is the chance to keep snapping and delete the outtakes. Don't feel like you need to take one perfect picture and be done with it.

Set your shooting mode to continuous and hold that shutter button down to take a burst. Later you can go back and delete the blinking and blurry pictures, but you're more likely to capture a good one amongst many. This photo of my kids playing in the water fountain is one of several I took in a burst.

Use aperture priority mode (could also be portrait mode) If you aren't comfortable shooting in manual yet, or find it difficult to have to continuously change your settings as your toddler runs from shade to sun and all over the place, try using aperture priority or Av mode.

This allows you to change your f-stop. The lower the number the more "blur" you'll achieve around your subject. My lenses go as low as f/2.8 and f/1.4. Don't go too low and too close or their whole face won't be in focus. You can set your lens to the f-stop you want, focus on your child, then let your camera do the rest.



Let Them Play!

Don't feel the need to stifle your child into a pose. Just let him do what he loves and be nearby to capture that. I like to have a great zoom lens on hand when capturing my active kids so I have the option of zooming with my feet, or my lens if I'm confined to the stands. The Canon 24-70mm lens is a great option for this.

Use a Higher Shutter Speed

If you're noticing a lot of your photos are coming out blurry, check your shutter speed. This will help you freeze the scene as your child is in motion. I try to keep my shutter speed above 1/500 when I'm trying to photograph my active kids. This may mean raising my ISO to compromise and give myself more flexibility, especially when I'm shooting indoors.

Get Creative and Silly

What makes your child laugh? Your singing? Dancing? Pretending to tickle him? A natural laugh will come across much better than a forced smile. And there's a good chance if you're being silly, he may stand still to watch long enough for you to snap a picture.

Pay Attention to the Background

The environment can give context or be distracting. It's so frustrating when I get a great picture of my kids but there's a bunch of junk behind them. Try to get it out of focus or move to get a better angle. To make it out of focus in your shot, try lowering your f-stop number and/or zoom in more with your lens. This will cause your background to go out of focus or out of the frame.



Follow Them in Action

If you move your camera at their speed and snap the photo you can freeze them in motion while blurring what's going on behind them, making for a fun action shot called panning. You'll want your shutter speed to be around 1/50 to 1/80 to achieve this. It can be tricky to achieve this but practice makes perfect. I usually raise my f-stop over f4 to give myself some leeway if I miss the focus, and use AI-Servo Mode for continuous focus.

It keeps tracking the moving subject versus focusing using One Shot mode when you hold the button halfway down. This will make catching a clear shot of your moving target a little easier.

Be Patient

It's rare that the very first picture I take is the one I want to keep, print and frame. If they did something cute, they'll likely do it again with a little encouragement or patience.

Good luck and have fun making memories with your little active ones.



About Jennifer

After the birth of her daughter, Jennifer fell in love with photography. Since then, the award-winning broadcast journalist and blogger from Austin, Texas, has shared her skills with millions of parents, including viewers of The Today Show, and readers of The Huffington Post and Parenting.com. Her passion for capturing stories about family life through photos and video inspired her award-winning parenting blog, Cherish365.com.