



WILDLIFE

PHOTOGRAPHIC

ISSUE 22 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017

KENYAN
PHOTO
SAFARI

**WILDLIFE IN
BLACK &
WHITE**

THE **BLACK
BEARS**
OF THORNTON CREEK

CAPTURING WILDLIFE

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL



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Image credit David Miles



EDITOR'S NOTES

BILL GOZANSKY
ISSUE 22 // JAN/FEB 2017



Welcome to issue 22 of Wildlife Photographic, the award-winning journal of the art and science of wildlife photography. Our readers, lots of amazing wildlife images, insights, and inspiration from top wildlife photographers from around the world. Each year we strive to improve the content of our magazine and this one will be no exception!

Here for 2017 we are bringing back our "Editor's Choice" gallery showcasing a specially curated collection of wildlife images from readers and contributors. Do you think you have an image that will wow the app editors? Then don't hesitate to send it our way. Who knows? You just might find your image featured in an upcoming issue of Wildlife Photographic. For more details on how to submit, see our "Editor's Choice" submission in this issue and our magazine's www.wildlifephotographic.com/submissions. And that's not our only change. As the year progresses, look for us to roll out additional new features on image critiques, the left cover image competition, a new app special edition, and more.

As always, I want to thank you, our readers, for your continued support. Our publication just keeps on getting bigger and better thanks to you. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly with your ideas, comments, and suggestions for future issues. I look forward to hearing from you.



Bill Gozansky
Wildlife Photographic Editor

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MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS

// JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017 //



BILL GOZANSKY
Bill Gozansky is the Editor of Wildlife Photographic. He has been in the field of wildlife photography for over 20 years. He has been a professional wildlife photographer for over 10 years. He has been a professional wildlife photographer for over 10 years. He has been a professional wildlife photographer for over 10 years.



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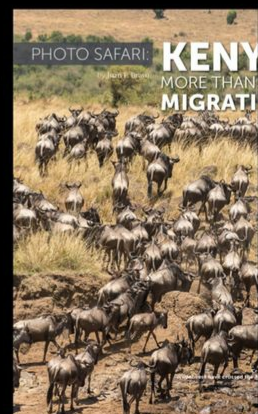
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EDITOR'S NOTES

BILL GOZANSKY

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ON THE COVER

"Red Fox"

by Thomas Chadwick

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MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS

// JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017 //



BILL GOZANSKY

Bill Gozansky is a travel, nature, and wildlife photographer based in south Florida. Bill's quest for images enables him to explore unique destinations and interact with diverse cultures across the globe. He currently leads photographic safaris to Namibia, Kenya, Costa Rica, and Ecuador. In a private or small group setting, Bill teaches field techniques of professional travel, nature, and wildlife photography in these remarkable natural areas. Bill has recently created the *Images for Conservation Fund Photo Guide Series: Nature & Travel Photography* app that illustrates professional photographic techniques for nature and travel photography.



JEFF PARKER

Jeff Parker leads photo tours throughout Central, South, and North America. He especially loves creating images in Patagonia, the Brazilian Pantanal, and the U.S. Southwest. Jeff holds workshops on a variety of nature photography topics at his Red Belly Ranch in central Texas. In 2016, Jeff and his wife, nature writer Mary O. Parker, released their book *Explore Texas: A Nature Travel Guide* (Texas A&M University Press). Jeff enjoys encouraging others in their photographic pursuits. He regularly speaks to camera clubs, nature centers, and Audubon groups about the power nature photography has to bring deeper awareness about issues of conservation.



STEWART FINLAYSON

Stewart Finlayson is the Director of the Gibraltar Museum's Natural History Department and is currently reading for a PhD at Anglia Ruskin University. Stewart's PhD looks at the relationship between Neanderthals and birds, specifically how Neanderthals exploited these animals; which species they used; and for what reason they used them. Stewart is also working on birds as climate indicators, trying to establish what habitats once looked like based on the bird species found in the fossil record. Stewart's passion has always been birds, and he has been involved in various studies in the Iberian region alongside Clive and Geraldine, his parents. He has headed a study of *Chiroptera* in Gibraltar since 2013. He is a successful wildlife photographer, is a member of the Royal Photographic Society, and has published work in various books and magazines. Stewart has coauthored *A Guide to Wild Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar*, which is published by Santana Books.



TIM PLOWDEN

Tim Plowden was born in 1973 in Berkshire, England. He grew up on the edge of the Chiltern Hills, always close to nature. Tim now lives in Singapore. He chose photography to express his emotional connection with the natural world. He combines his love of travel with documenting wildlife and conservation stories. Tim has won two film awards for his first short nature documentary, *The Return Of The Salmon*. The production received its London premiere at the British Documentary Film Festival in June 2015. His work has appeared in exhibitions, books, interior design showrooms, newspapers, magazines, and online.



THOMAS CHADWICK

Thomas Chadwick is a nationally published, award-winning nature photographer based in Tampa, Florida. His work is sold as prints, appears in magazines and national advertisements, and has been used in other mediums as well.



CONSTANCE MIER

Constance Mier is a wildlife and nature photographer who derives inspiration from her canoe explorations. Living in Miami, Florida, she can easily access the Everglades and Biscayne Bay, the two areas where she spends most of her time photographing. She often spends several days at a time paddling in the Everglades, capturing images in the remotest places that are accessible only by canoe or kayak. As a result, her photographs offer a rare glimpse of these beautiful wilderness areas as seen from a canoe.



JUAN BRAVO

Juan F. Bravo is a nature and wildlife photographer from San Juan, Puerto Rico. A few years ago, he was able to devote more time to photography and has since travelled extensively in pursuit of his passion. His wife, Nina, always a loyal companion, is an awesome spotter. Nina can spy the most elusive species so Juan can jump into action. They plan to continue their photographic journey of capturing nature at its best.



ANNA-MART KRUGER

iCapture Photo Safaris serves as an example to photographers who work full time that it's possible to have the best of both worlds. After several years of traveling through Africa and perfecting the art of wildlife, landscape, animalscape, and micro-photography, a passionate photography group consisting of Anna-Mart Kruger, Helene Wiggett, and Petri and Estelle Ackermann decided to share its members' passion and knowledge with others by organizing and hosting small and exclusive photo safaris in Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, Kenya, and Uganda. Their main objective is to make your photo safari dreams a reality even if you have a full-time career and see that you capture images which will add value to your portfolio.

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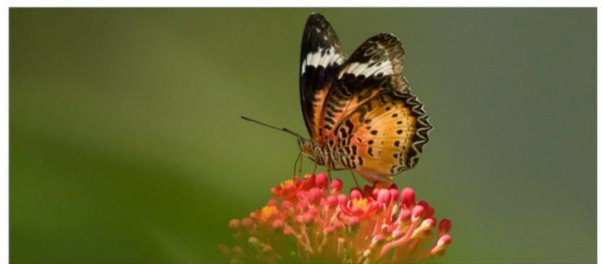
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The challenge of staying focused

Golden-Fronted Woodpecker
Camp Lula Sams, Brownsville, Texas USA
*Canon 1Ds Mark II with Canon 300mm f/4 + 1.4x
420mm, 1/400 sec, f/6.3, ISO 400*



It is often challenging to photograph in high-contrast light situations. Extreme highlights and shadows can make rendering detail in both the bright and dark parts of the image nearly impossible. However, sometimes we can turn high-contrast light conditions to our advantage. When bright light falls on a subject, consider using it as an isolating effect by letting the background go black, which provides a somewhat surreal, studio-like atmosphere. The technique is actually quite simple: You can create it by setting the exposure for your well-lit subject (spot metering is often a good choice) and not worrying about the background.

To create this image, I had a natural-looking feeder setup that was well-positioned to catch the afternoon light and a stand of dark trees in the background that received very little light in comparison to the foreground. Here I metered (set the exposure) for the golden-fronted woodpecker in the foreground and let the background go black. This technique can even work well on sunny days in harsh, filtered-light conditions. (Think of light beams coming through a forest canopy to illuminate a flower on the forest floor.) Whenever you see these spotlight or high-contrast light situations, think about how you can leverage it for greater creative impact.

FIELD NOTES



About the Photographer

Bill Gozansky

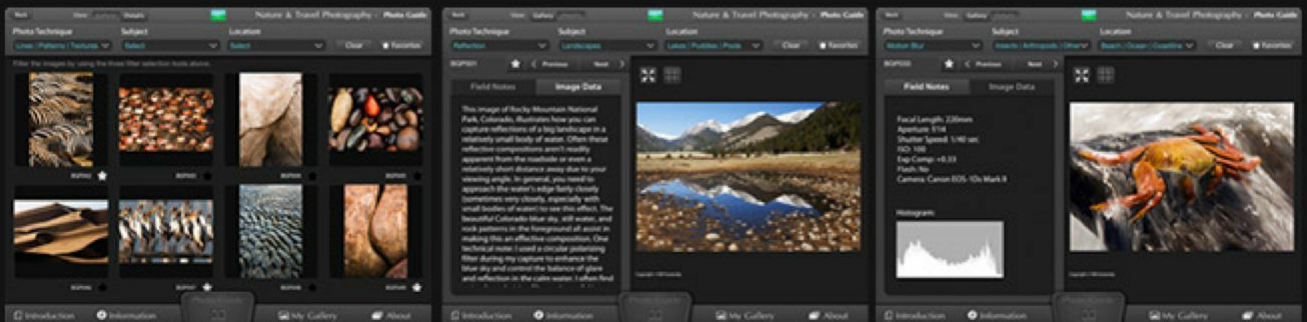
Bill Gozansky is a travel, nature, and wildlife photographer based in south Florida. Bill's quest for images enables him to explore unique destinations and interact with diverse cultures across the globe. He currently leads photographic safaris to Namibia, Kenya, Costa Rica, and Ecuador. In a private or small group setting, Bill teaches field techniques of professional travel, nature, and wildlife photography in these remarkable natural areas. Bill's award-winning images have been exhibited in galleries, published in many periodicals and books, and sold as fine art prints to private collectors. Bill has recently created the *Images for Conservation Fund Photo Guide Series: Nature & Travel Photography* app that illustrates professional photographic techniques for nature and travel photography.



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If you have a passion for wildlife photography and you would like to share your images with others, then you could have your images published in Wildlife Photographic magazine!

Whether you are a budding amateur photographer who would like to see their favourite photo published or a professional photographer with tips and advice to share, we would love to hear from you. Your submission can be based on any topic relating to wildlife photography, including post production, as well as reviews of cameras, lenses, and equipment.

What's more, as WP is fully interactive, we can also include links to your online gallery, blog, or website. This makes it incredibly easy for our readers to discover you and your work. It also allows professionals a platform to showcase the services and products they offer such as workshops, safaris, prints, or books.



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PHOTO SAFARI:

by Juan F. Bravo

KENYA

MORE THAN THE MIGRATION



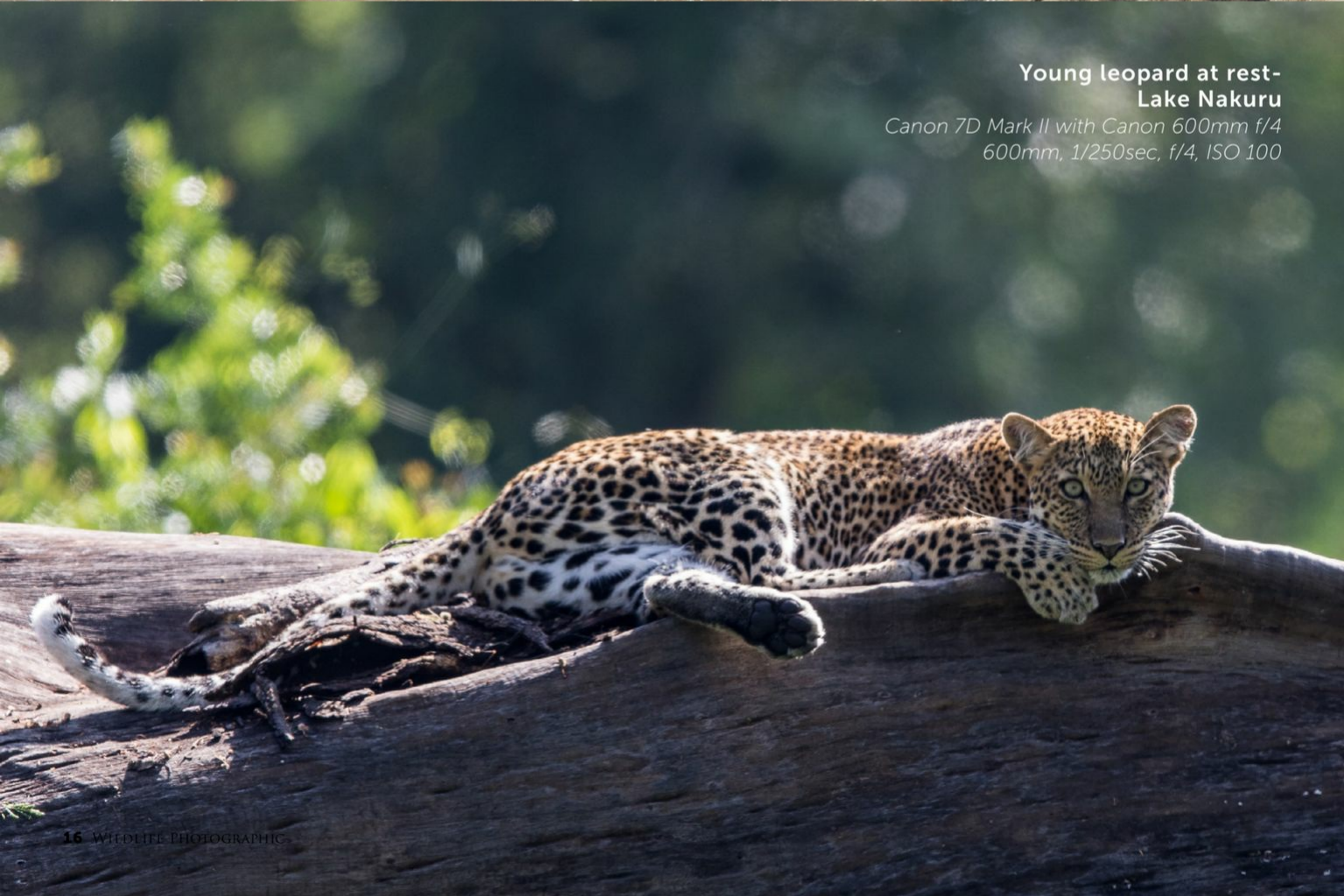
Crossing -
Wildebeest have crossed the Mara River
Canon EOS 1DX with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
278mm, 1/800sec, f/8, ISO 400



READER CONTRIBUTION



**A frantic stampede -
Mass of Wildebeest crossing the Mara River**
*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 600mm f/4
600mm, 1/1000sec, f/8, ISO 400*



**Young leopard at rest -
Lake Nakuru**
*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 600mm f/4
600mm, 1/250sec, f/4, ISO 100*



**Jumper -
Mara River**

*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 600mm f/4
600mm, 1/640sec, f/8, ISO 400*

As one of world's most spectacular natural events, Africa's wildebeest migration features a movement of animals more intense than anything else on earth. Every year from July through October, close to two million wildebeest, zebras, and antelope migrate from Serengeti National Park in Tanzania to Kenya's Maasai Mara National Reserve.

In their quest for greener pastures and water, these herbivores must cross the mighty Mara River where huge crocodiles lie in wait. More drama unfolds as they are greeted by hungry carnivores on the opposite shore. The stage is set for a showdown between predators and prey. The carnivores are mainly comprised of Nile crocodiles, lions, cheetahs, leopards, and hyenas. The prey are wildebeest (aka gnu), zebras, Thompson's and Grant's gazelles, elands, and impalas.

The spectacle of life and death plays out before our eyes, recalling Darwin's "survival of the fittest." But not all of those who succumb do so to predators. Many simply drown in the river, trampled by a chaotic and frantic mass of flesh stampeding from one shore to another. However, the sheer number of those migrating beasts easily dwarfs those lost to this gauntlet. They will soon cover the vast grasslands as far as the eye can see, and their life cycle will continue.

To photograph the migration, you must carefully plan your strategy. You'll need a good safari guide, one who stays in radio contact with other guides and thus always has information about the location of the herds. Realize that river crossings aren't a given. Your guide must remain attentive to where the herds gather and when they're likely to cross. A good guide will






**Tender moments -
Lake Nakuru**

Canon EOS 1DX with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
600mm, 1/320sec, f/4.5, ISO 8000

**Mount Kilimanjaro -
Amboseli National Park**

*Canon EOS 1DX with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
148mm, 1/80sec, f/11, ISO 400*





anticipate a probable river crossing and situate your vehicle well ahead of others so you can have an unobstructed view.

Once in position, the waiting game begins. Prepare your gear and position your bean bags posthaste so you can get ready for the action. It could take minutes—or hours—until the first wildebeest or zebra takes the lead plunge into the river, followed by the others in a massive frenzy. The photo ops are endless, and you'll find yourself tempted to just fire away with the shutter. But don't limit the experience by observing it solely through your camera's viewfinder. Absorb the action and see what is going on around you. The scene is called one of the wonders of the world for good reason. Relish it!

Although the wildebeest migration itself lures plenty of people to Kenya, the Mara is also famous for its exceptional population of African mammals, especially Maasai lions, Tanzanian cheetahs, and African leopards. The density of game and variety of birdlife combine with open skies and vast savannahs to create a marvelous ecosystem.

**African Pigmy Falcon -
Samburu National Park**

*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 600mm f/4
600mm, 1/4000sec, f/4, ISO 400*



**Vulturine guineafowls -
Samburu National Park**

*Canon EOS 1DX with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
400mm, 1/640sec, f/8, ISO 400*



**Striped hyena -
Lake Nakuru**

*Canon EOS 1DX with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
400mm, 1/500sec, f/5.6, ISO 1250*

**Juvenile leopard -
Samburu National Park**

*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 600mm f/4
600mm, 1/2000sec, f/4.5, ISO 400*



Still, I'd suggest that you shouldn't limit your travels in Kenya to the Mara. Consider expanding the scope of your trip to other reserves throughout the country. Parks such as Samburu, Lake Nakuru, and Amboseli showcase the vast variety of landscapes, wildlife, human cultures, and experiences that Kenya has to offer. Most importantly, though, these parks provide an opportunity for you to view certain species not found in the Mara.

For example, in Samburu you can find endemic species such as the reticulated giraffe, the Grevy's zebra, the gerenuk, and the beisa oryx. Resident big cats include the Maasai lion, Tanzanian cheetah, and leopard, and elephants, Cape buffalo, and hippopotamuses make appearances. Other mammals frequently seen in the park include olive baboons, warthogs, Grant's gazelles, Kirk's dik-diks, impala, and waterbucks.

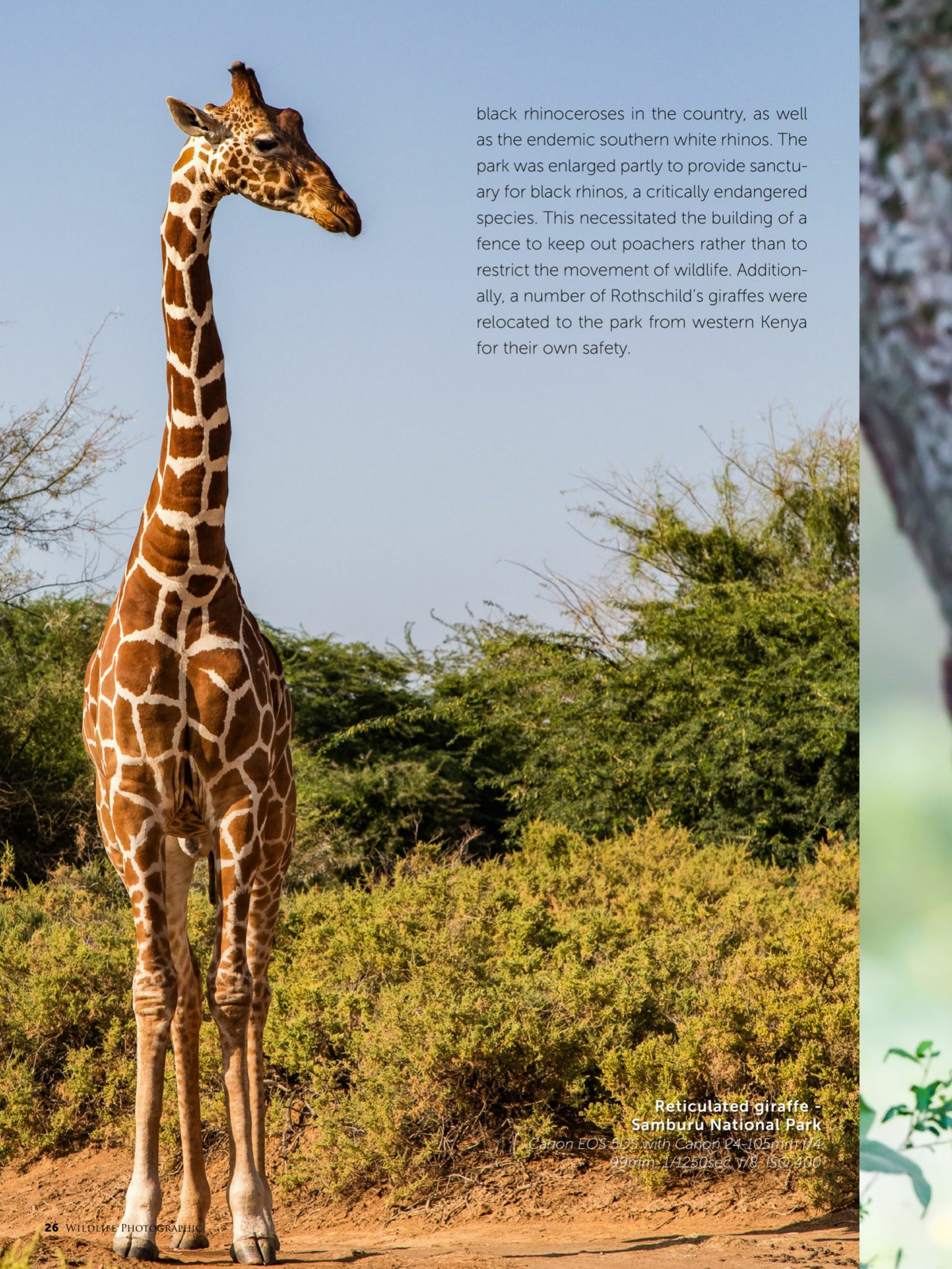
Additionally, there are over 1,000 bird species in Kenya, and roughly 350 of these make their home in Samburu. Your long lenses will come in handy for capturing close-up images of grey-headed kingfishers, sunbirds, bee-eaters, marabou storks, crowned and martial eagles, vulturine guineafowls, lilac-breasted rollers, secretary birds, superb starlings, northern red-billed hornbills, yellow-billed hornbills, and various vultures.

To the south lies Lake Nakuru National Park, which is best known for the thousands (and sometimes millions) of flamingos nesting along its shores. Indeed, birds abound in Lake Nakuru, and you'll find some 450 resident species there. In 2005, Lake Nakuru was branded "a bird watcher's paradise" by the Kenyan Wildlife Service. The park also has the largest concentration of eastern

**Malaika and cub -
Maasai Mara**

*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 600mm f/4 + 1.4x
840mm, 1/2000sec, f/5.6, ISO 1000*





black rhinoceroses in the country, as well as the endemic southern white rhinos. The park was enlarged partly to provide sanctuary for black rhinos, a critically endangered species. This necessitated the building of a fence to keep out poachers rather than to restrict the movement of wildlife. Additionally, a number of Rothschild's giraffes were relocated to the park from western Kenya for their own safety.

**Reticulated giraffe -
Samburu National Park**

Canon EOS 5DS with Canon 24-105mm 1/4-
99mm, 1/1250sec, 1/8, ISO 400



**Migingo Pride leader -
Lake Nakuru**

*Canon EOS 1DX with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
600mm, 1/200sec, f/4.5, ISO 6400*

Even further south is Amboseli National Park, which is famous for being the best place in Africa to get close to free-ranging elephants. You can also see spectacular views of Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest mountain and the tallest free-standing mountain in the world. Amboseli offers some wonderful opportunities to see African wildlife because of its sparse vegetation. There is also a host of Kenyan birds both large and small.

Witnessing the migration was on top of my bucket list, and I was privileged to have experienced this magnificent event. Broadening my travel to include other parks made my Kenya adventure whole. This unique opportunity enriched both my knowledge and photography, and I can only hope that others do likewise.



**Big beauties -
Amboseli National Park**

*Canon EOS 1DX with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
200mm, 1/640sec, f/5, ISO 200*

Tips:

- It can be tricky to predict when the best time to view the migration will be since the herds' movements defy prediction. Nowadays, though, you can find websites that keep tabs on the herds and their exact sightings. Bush pilots and safari guides who traverse the area provide most of this information.
- If you own a long lens, bring it! You will probably need it, especially in the Mara.
- There will be dust—*plenty* of it. Plan on not changing lenses while on safari to keep dust particles from getting into the camera's mirror and sensor. Bring along a rocket duster, as well as plenty of lens wipes and cloths. Cover your cameras while on the move by placing them inside your camera bags. A pillow cover will also keep dust away.
- Bring more than one camera body. You don't want to miss the action because your camera failed.
- The best time to spot game is at dawn and dusk. At midday, most animals take a siesta under the shade of a tree, usually one far from the roads you're driving on.
- Learn about the animals ahead of your visit so you can identify behavior and anticipate their next move. Then you can position yourself for that great shot.
- Hire a reputable photographic safari outfit with knowledgeable and experienced guides.





About the Photographer

Juan Bravo

Juan F. Bravo is a nature and wild-life photographer from San Juan, Puerto Rico. A few years ago, he was able to devote more time to photography and has since travelled extensively in pursuit of his passion. His wife, Nina, always a loyal companion, is an awesome spotter. Nina can spy the most elusive species so Juan can jump into action. They plan to continue their photographic journey of capturing nature at its best.

www





**Sunset in the Mara -
Maasai Mara**

*Canon EOS 1DX with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
278mm, 1/25sec, f/16, ISO 100*

★★★★★ *Excellent!*

★★★★★ *Visually Stunning!*

★★★★★ *The Very Best!*



★★★★★ *Fantastic Magazine*

*You can see this magazine is written by photographers,
for photographers. It's fantastic.*

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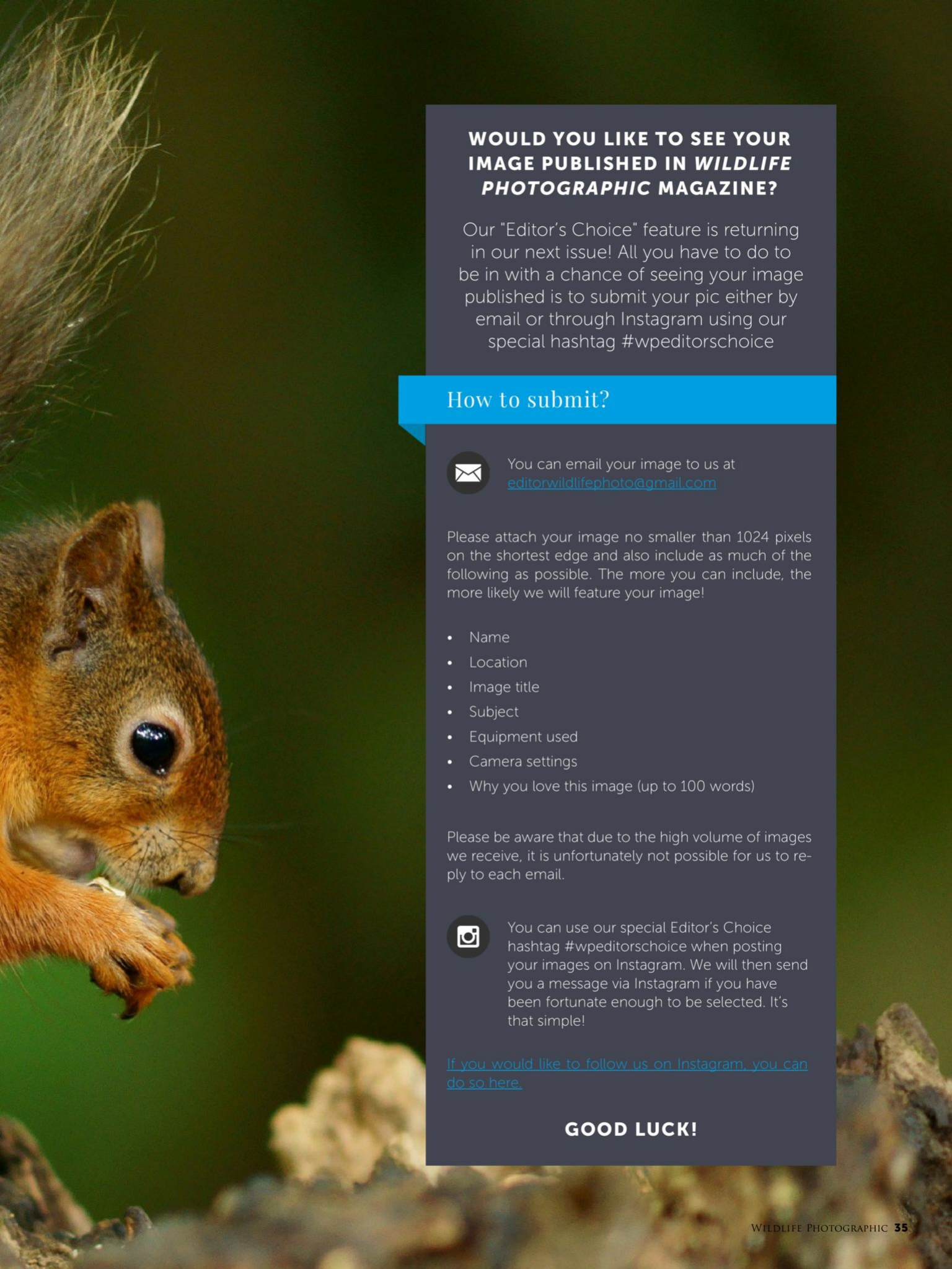
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EDITOR'S CHOICE



PHOTO CREDIT: PETER TRIMMING



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Please attach your image no smaller than 1024 pixels on the shortest edge and also include as much of the following as possible. The more you can include, the more likely we will feature your image!

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- Subject
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GOOD LUCK!

A black bear cub is shown in a close-up, looking directly at the camera. It is standing in a field of tall green grass. In the background, there are out-of-focus pine branches and green foliage. The bear has dark black fur and a lighter brown patch on its snout.

HOW TO CAPTURE **WILDLIFE** *UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL*

by Thomas Chadwick

**Black Bear -
Wyoming, U.S.**

*Canon 1DX with Canon 300mm f/2.8
300mm, 1/500 sec, f/2.8, ISO 200*





**Red Fox,
New Jersey, U.S.**

*Canon 5DSR with Canon 70-200mm f/2.8
200mm, 1/2000 sec, f/4, ISO 400*



Capturing wildlife up close and personal can prove challenging for nature photographers—and also worthwhile. Shortening the distance between camera and subject allows the photographer to experience different points of view, and wide-angle lenses can throw a subject into a strikingly larger-than-life perspective. While successfully capturing such pictures requires more than a little skill, the fundamentals are simple. Every close encounter has three main parts: location, approach, and exit.

**Red Fox,
New Jersey, U.S.**

*Canon 5DSR with Canon 16-35mm f/4
35mm, 1/1250 sec, f/5, ISO 640*





Location is critical to capturing close-up images. You can easily locate most any animal or bird if you familiarize yourself with what they eat, the availability of water, and terrain where they nest. Animals need to drink water, so if there is limited availability in an area, spend time at the water source waiting for wildlife to come to drink. Many animals follow a regular routine depending on the local weather or season. Some mammals might frequent the same water source during the same window of time. Be on the lookout for flattened grass, dirt trails, or a large number of footprints indicating what path they normally take. As an example, after locating an area with a dense fox population, I walked the woods looking for a path to a source of water. After locating a dirt trail, I had the opportunity to capture many unique images.



**Rocky Mountain Goat,
Wyoming, U.S.**

*Canon 5DSR with Canon 600mm f/4
600mm, 1/2000 sec, f/4, ISO 200*



**Harlequin Duck,
New Jersey, U.S.**

*Canon 5DSR with Canon 600mm f/4 + 1.4x
840mm, 1/1000 sec, f/16, ISO 640*

While there are numerous techniques for approaching wildlife, two are universal regardless of the photographer's location. Before your approach, think first about what angle of the sun will work best and then which background you prefer. The best strategy for approaching wildlife is to not approach them at all. Instead, let them approach *you*. When you let animals approach you, they will appear relaxed in your images, which allows you to capture their natural behavior. You should identify the paths they take

and set up in an area that leads to you. When traveling to a location, approach slowly and stay as close to the ground as possible. As you walk or crawl, pause every time an animal looks at you. Only resume your approach once it continues with its normal behavior. When I was photographing harlequin ducks on a jetty, I noticed that they had a routine of starting at one end and slowly making their way to the other looking for food. I set up in the middle of the jetty, which allowed me to get within five feet of them.

**Black Skimmer Egg, Baby, and Adult,
Pinellas County, Florida, U.S.**

*Canon 1DX with Canon 600mm f/4 + 2x
1200mm, 1/1250 sec, f/6.3, ISO 800*





However, if you are photographing nesting birds, you won't have the ability to intercept their path. The best way to approach nests without stressing the animal is gradually—very gradually. With some shorebird nests, I can crawl a couple of inches every minute without stressing them. Also, getting as low to the ground as possible helps the animal perceive you as less of a threat.

**Baby Black Skimmer,
Pinellas County, Florida, U.S.**

*Canon 1DX with Canon 600mm f/4 + 2x
1200mm, 1/1000 sec, f/16, ISO 2000*



Knowing when to exit a situation is as equally important as the other two elements. You should leave your subjects if they show signs of stress. For nesting shorebirds, photographers should leave well before 11:00 a.m. Your presence could put stress on the bird, and it could fly away from the nest, allowing eggs to spoil or babies to die from predators or heat exhaustion. Your exit should be similar to your approach: low and slow.



**Great Egret,
Pinellas County, Florida, U.S.**

*Canon 5DSR with Canon 24-70mm f/2.8
65mm, 1/4000 sec, f/4, ISO 320*



**About the Photographer
Thomas Chadwick**

Thomas Chadwick is a nationally published, award-winning nature photographer based in Tampa, Florida. His work is sold as prints, appears in magazines and national advertisements, and has been used in other mediums as well.

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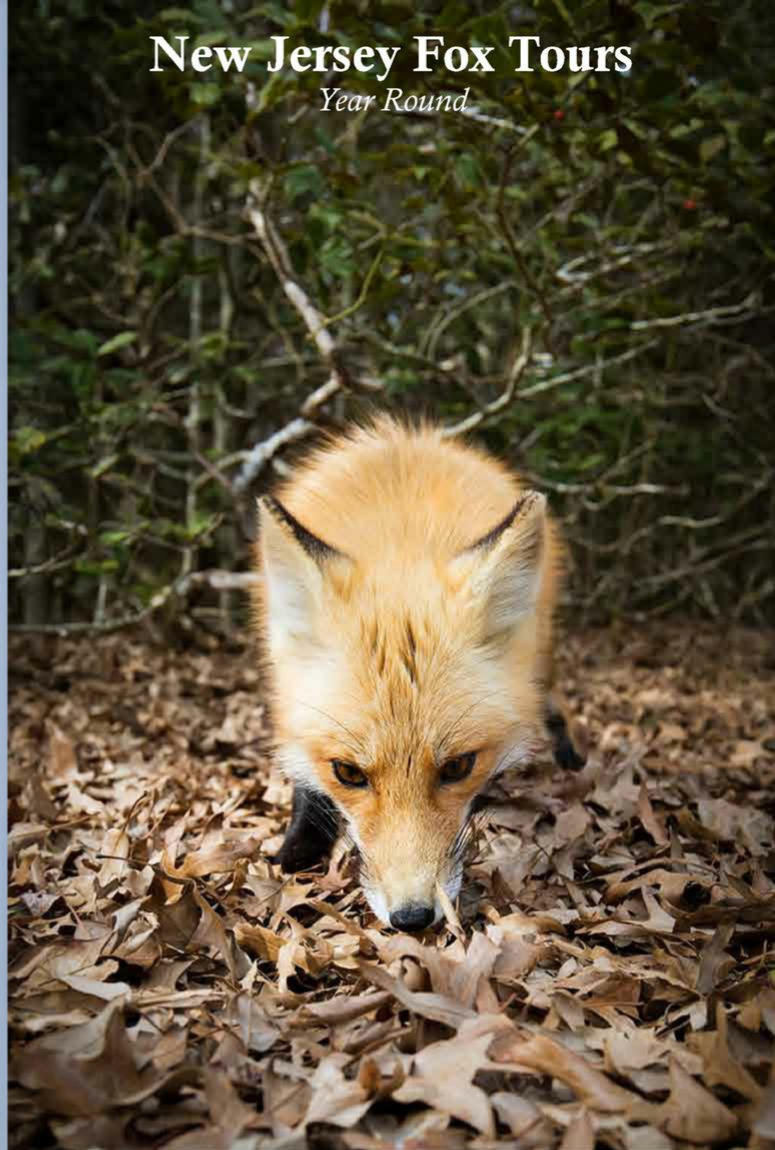
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BACKYARD BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY

LESSON #2

by Jeff Parker

MAKE 'EM HAPPY

Male Northern Cardinal at water

*Canon 5D Mark III with Canon 600mm f/4
1/4000sec, f/4, ISO 800*



Once you have done some research on the birds you currently see or potentially could see in your backyard and have begun a journal to document their dates of arrival and behaviors, what's next? Simply bringing them in and convincing them to stick around!

Like all animals, birds need food, water, and shelter. The more of these things you have present in your yard—and the more suited they are for visiting birds—the more winged subjects you'll find at your fingertips.

“

The basic bird feeder and
bird seed at your local grocery
store isn't necessarily the
best choice.

”

STEP #1: FOOD

Most folks are familiar with basic bird feeders, but they actually have a lot of variation—and for good reason. Different birds eat different foods and feed on them in different ways. So keep in mind that the basic bird feeder and bird seed at your local grocery store isn't necessarily the best choice. In fact, it's probably *not* the best. Many wild bird seed mixes (especially the cheap ones) contain mostly red millet. Most birds don't like red millet and will simply knock it to the ground as they try to get to the good stuff. Squirrels and house sparrows will eat it. Otherwise it goes to waste.

If you have to put out only one kind of bird food, make it black-oil sunflower seeds. This is the most attractive seed to the greatest variety of birds. I always keep at least one large feeder filled with nothing but black-oil sunflower seeds.

Things start to get more complicated as you consider individual species. For instance, finches typically prefer nyger or thistle seeds. At my Red Belly Ranch in central Texas, the only finches I see—and photograph—are American goldfinches, which arrive each winter. Historically, these birds have preferred nyger, and I once offered it in a special sock (i.e., mesh) feeder. However, I started noticing that they went for the black-oil sunflower seeds I offered other species. Why? I honestly don't know. What I do know is that I'm glad since sock/mesh feeders used for thistle seed tend to be high maintenance, often tearing and deteriorating. That doesn't mean, however, that the finches in your neck of the woods won't prefer sunflower seeds to their traditional diet. If you have finches, I'd suggest trying nyger first.



**Male Ruby-Throated
Hummingbird at feeder**

*Canon 7D with Canon 100-400mm f/4.5-5.6
370mm, 1/200sec, f/22, ISO 800, multi-flash setup*



Do buntings visit your backyard? White proso millet does a great job of making them stick around! When painted buntings show up, I put out several feeders filled with white proso millet. The buntings don't eat sunflower seeds, but they really go after white millet. Unfortunately, it's also a favorite of cowbirds (which may be a nuisance to some photographers), so if you don't have buntings, white millet might not be a good choice.

Peanuts are a favorite of jays, woodpeckers, and titmice. I never saw a blue jay in my yard until I began setting out peanuts. I feed them whole, raw peanuts that I purchase from the produce section

of my local grocery store. I find that much cheaper than buying them packaged as bird food. If you buy peanuts at the grocery store, make sure they are raw and *not* salted!

Many birds do not eat seeds. For these, you can try either live or dried mealworms or suet. I make my own suet using equal parts peanut butter, lard, and cornmeal. I add cornmeal until the mixture is rather dry and not too greasy. Then I can form it into cakes and use it with suet cages. You can also apply it directly to tree trunks or hide it in whatever photography setup you create.



STEP #2: WATER

Water can be a great attractor and entice many species that do not visit feeders. Given the hot, dry summers in central Texas, water really brings in the birds. Even in areas that are not so dry, you can have success with water, especially if you give it a little movement.

A basic bird bath is a good start. When selecting your bird bath, make sure that it's not too deep or slippery. Many bird baths are designed to look nice with no thought as to how birds would actually use them. If your bath is too deep, steep, or slippery, partially fill it with some flat rocks. This makes the water shallower and offers birds a better grip.

The sky's the limit with water offerings. In addition to bird baths, consider shallow pools, fountains, waterfalls, or a drip. Something as simple as a clay saucer with a drip can work wonders. Both the movement and the sound attract birds' attention.

Remember that it's important to keep vegetation back several feet from your bird bath. Bathing birds can become distracted, and that makes them especially vulnerable to predation. Anything that provides concealment for cats could prove fatal to your photography subjects.

Eastern Bluebirds on a nest box

Canon 7D with Canon 600mm f/4

1/640sec, f/5, ISO 800





“

If you buy a ready-made
bird house, make sure that it's
built for actual use and not
just to look cute.

”

STEP #3: NEST BOXES

Nest boxes can be a great way to get birds to stick around your yard. Many birds will utilize them, and some like purple martins nest almost exclusively in human-provided homes. Just like bird baths, if you buy a ready-made bird house, make sure that it's built for actual use and not just to look cute. You can find many plans online to help you build your own in various sizes that will accommodate anything from bluebirds to screech owls to wood ducks.

In Europe, the British Trust for Ornithology offers some great PDFs of nest boxes, and you can access them [here](#). In North America, you'll find wonderful nest box plans at Cornell Lab of Ornithology's site [here](#).

Painted Bunting playing in the sprinkler

Canon 7D with Canon 600mm f/4
1/640sec, f/4, ISO 800

STEP #4: VEGETATION

Finally, the plants in your yard can attract and retain the birds you'd like to photograph. They can also benefit other wildlife such as butterflies. But make sure you utilize native plants as much as possible. Many non-native trees and plants offer nothing of value to our wildlife. A typical suburban lawn is biologically sterile and little better than concrete from a wildlife perspective.

In the U.S., your local Audubon chapter should be able to point you to resources for learning about native vegetation that requires less water and fertilizer. In Europe, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) provides plenty of great info about native gardening.

Don't use pesticides without a very good reason. Not only does that put poison into your own environment, but virtually all backyard birds eat insects during breeding season. No insects means no food for fledglings at a time when their growing bodies need lots of protein.

With a little bit of effort, you can make your yard a very attractive place for both yourself and local birds. Lots of birds mean lots of photo opportunities!



About the Photographer Jeff Parker

Jeff Parker leads photo tours throughout Central, South, and North America. He especially loves creating images in Patagonia, the Brazilian Pantanal, and the U.S. Southwest. Jeff holds workshops on a variety of nature photography topics at his Red Belly Ranch in central Texas. In 2016, Jeff and his wife, nature writer Mary O. Parker, released their book *Explore Texas: A Nature Travel Guide* (Texas A&M University Press). Jeff enjoys encouraging others in their photographic pursuits. He regularly speaks to camera clubs, nature centers, and Audubon groups about the power nature photography has to bring deeper awareness about issues of conservation.

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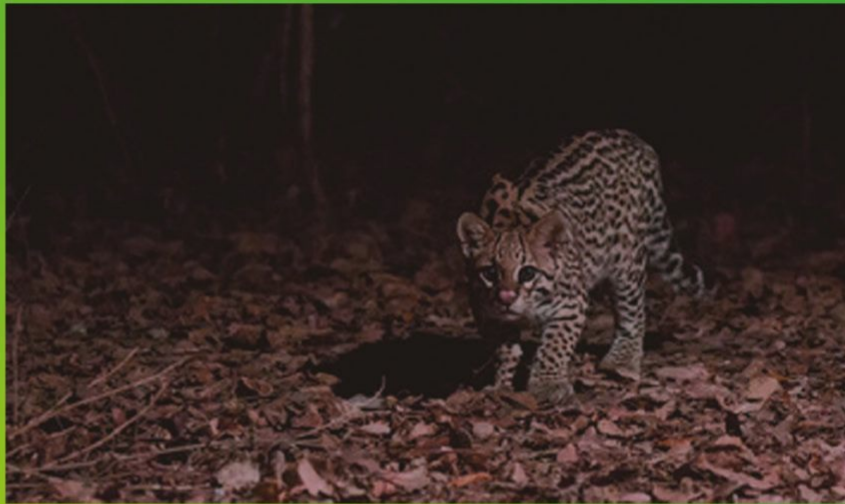


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WITH STEWART FINLAYSON



About the Photographer

Stewart Finlayson

Stewart Finlayson is the Director of the Gibraltar Museum's Natural History Department and is currently reading for a PhD at Anglia Ruskin University. Stewart's PhD looks at the relationship between Neanderthals and birds, specifically how Neanderthals exploited these animals; which species they used; and for what reason they used them. Stewart is also working on birds as climate indicators, trying to establish what habitats once looked like based on the bird species found in the fossil record. Stewart's passion has always been birds, and he has been involved in various studies in the Iberian region alongside Clive and Geraldine, his parents. He has headed a study of *Chiroptera* in Gibraltar since 2013. He is a successful wildlife photographer, is a member of the Royal Photographic Society, and has published work in various books and magazines. Stewart has coauthored *A Guide to Wild Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar*, which is published by Santana Books.

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WP // *What is the one lens you'd take with you on a deserted island? (Well, not necessarily an "island" habitat, but essentially your favorite lens if you had to narrow it down to just one.)*

SF // That's not an easy question to answer! Seeing as I mainly photograph birds, it would probably be one of my longer telephoto lenses. My decision on focal length is often (but not always) based on the subject's distance from my hide and its size. If you forced my hand, though, I'd have to say the Nikkor 800mm f5.6. This beast of a lens is absolutely *amazing*. I often use it when photographing anything from smaller passerines to large vultures. The beauty of it is that Nikon includes a 1.25x teleconverter in the purchase price that boosts you up to 1000mm! The lens is large and heavy, but I must say that it's not as heavy as one might imagine. Don't forget that, if you really wanted to, you could slap a 2x teleconverter on it for up to 1600mm of focal length!

WP // *What is one item you have in your camera bag that might surprise us?*

SF // Easy! I have a bat detector in my bag! Yes, you read that correctly. In my other life as an ecologist, one of the groups I work on in addition to birds is bats. Often when I'm

in the field, I want to see what is emerging around me in the evenings and early mornings, so I use my detector while waiting for the birds to arrive!

WP // *Will you give us a virtual look inside your camera bag?*

SF // No doubt about it, I am a Nikon fanatic! I've always used Nikon equipment and love the build quality of their products.

WP // *Will you share one of your images with us that you really enjoy and tell us why you like it (or the story behind the capture)?*

SF // I was once working on a project where I needed to obtain images of white-tailed eagles. I travelled to the Black River Valley in Sweden during February, and it was *freezing*. Temperatures were plummeting, and the weather had been quite bad for a few days before our arrival. Early in the morning, we put on our snow shoes and head torches and walked through very deep snow to our hide for the day. The eagles had been seen roosting in the trees around us, and it seemed a good starting point. I remember looking out through the little window and seeing that it was frozen over. The sun was slowly starting to rise. A little while later, we began to see movement, and a spectacular golden eagle came into view. The white-tailed eagles were also around. I could see them in the trees, but they were still too far away. A while later, we saw one a few hundred meters away sitting on a tree, and it launched itself and flew directly at me. It was one of those moments I will never forget. I could see he was looking at me, and all I could do in that split second was shoot and hope I had worked up my ISO properly beforehand!



*Nikon D4s with Nikon 500mm f/4
1/4000 sec, f/4, ISO 400 + 0.67 Ev*





For me, it's not so much the image, but the memory, the moment—remembering the sounds of the eagles calling to each other, the excitement every time I saw movement, and my ridiculously cold hands!

WP // *Tell us about the shot you missed, the one image that “got away” that still haunts you.*

SF // It has to be when I was in Sierra Morena in Spain photographing the Spanish imperial eagle. Clive and I had spent three days in this one hide with little luck. The eagles were

around, but kept their distance, refusing their usual viewing perches and preferring a higher tree some distance away. At that point, a red fox came along the open patch of land in front of us, skulking around and scavenging. The fox walked past some bushes, and the next thing I knew, an imperial eagle swooped down and started attacking the fox! It was an amazing moment—but I could barely see it since I had these annoying bushes in front of me! Clive captured one or two frames where you can see the eagle making itself as big as it could, lifting its feathers and approaching the cornered fox. This only took a few seconds because the fox ran off as soon as it could, but it will always go down in my book as the one that got away. I came back from that trip with few images, but it was one of the best experiences of my life.

WP // *What are your top five wildlife photography destinations?*

SF //

1. The Pyrenees
2. The Black River Valley in Sweden
3. The Cadiz Province in Spain
4. The Extremadura Province in Spain
5. The Farne Islands in the United Kingdom.

WP // *What is one place you haven't been where you would like to go photograph wildlife?*

SF // Hokkaido, Japan. I've never been there and have seen some stunning images friends have taken of the area. It's on my list!

WP // *Can you give our readers one tip to help them become better wildlife photographers?*

SF // I believe that quite a few things go into taking a good picture, but if I had to narrow it down to one, I would say that it's all about eye contact. Sure, you can have a spectacular image without it, but there's something special about an image of an animal that has an eye-to-eye perspective. You can almost sense what it's feeling, no matter if it's a short-toed eagle arriving exhausted in Europe after crossing the strait of Gibraltar or a golden eagle staring at you without a worry in the world, knowing you are in its territory. The eyes speak to you through a photograph.

WP // *Can you recommend one of your favorite items of photography-related gear (e.g., photo equipment, a book, software tool) for our readers?*

SF // The Nikon 1.7x teleconverter. It's crystal clear, won't lose much light, and allows for an added amount of focal length in the field. What's more, it's small, weighs very little, and fits in a pocket. The beauty of the 1.7x over the 2.0x is that it will still work with your autofocus!

WP // *Tell us about something you are working on (e.g., a project, book, upcoming workshop) that you'd like to promote.*

SF // I'm currently in the early stages of planning another wildlife photography book with an accompanying exhibition.



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WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHY **IN BLACK & WHITE**

by Anna-Mart Kruger of iCapture Photo Safaris



**Greater Flamingos,
Walvis Bay, Namibia**

*Nikon D750 with Sigma 150-600mm
490mm, 1/800 sec, f/13, ISO 400*





As a wildlife photographer, I truly love color, but black-and-white images have a certain timelessness that nothing else can duplicate. For me, good black-and-white photography employs masterfully handled gray tones to provoke emotions so deep they make the viewer's soul vibrate. Color may show the actuality of a scene, but black and white provides a particular perception of captured reality. Black and white can add drama to your wildlife images that color might hide from the viewer. That's why black-and-white photography is such a rewarding and challenging field.

"LET THERE BE LIGHT ..."

I'm sure everybody knows this quote from the Bible's creation account. For me, it explains this particular photographic discipline in the clearest way. First there was light and then everything else. First there was light—and then

photography. What we essentially do in black-and-white photography is to work with that primal light and its corresponding shadows. To change frameworks, black-and-white photography is something like poetry: Its power lies less in what is captured than what is left out.

Naturally, such a shift in the medium means photographers will need to alter their own approaches. Effective black-and-white photography necessarily relies on form, texture, lines, contrast, tonality, and composition to engage the viewer. Its biggest advantage is that it provides far greater leeway for exploring tonality. Try to use your black and white images to highlight the patterns of an animal's fur or the textures of its skin and to turn a distracting background into a neutral gray. It is very important to note that not every image will make a great black-and-white photo. Some images and subjects will require color to make an impact.

**Cheetah,
Masai Mara, Kenya**

*Nikon D610 with Sigma 150-500mm
500mm, 1/250, f/6.3, ISO 1400*



**Black Rhino,
Masai Mara, Kenya**

*Nikon D610 with Sigma 150-500mm
500mm, 1/500 sec, f/6.3, ISO 125*



IMAGES THAT CONVERT WELL TO BLACK AND WHITE

Look for contrast. In my experience, the best black-and-white images usually have a nearly pure-white portion, as well as a section that's almost black. Such increased contrast adds interest to the scene.

Find a wide range of grays. Having diverse black-and-white shades in the image will help make a picture engaging. If other areas do not have a wide range of varying tones of gray, the photo will most likely look dull.

Look for patterns. Patterns are interesting because of their ordered repetition. Color

merely distracts us from giving the pattern our full attention. Once you start looking for patterns to shoot in black and white, you'll notice them *everywhere*.

CONSIDER COMPOSITION

Most general tips on how to compose or frame a good shot apply just as much to black-and-white photography as they do to shooting in color. While a colorful image sometimes hides poor composition, black and white enhances and brings out the way in which you've organized your wildlife shot. For instance, using shallow depth of field to isolate the subject will make for a dramatic portrait and bring out the textures.





**White-Backed Vultures,
Zimanga, Natal**

*Nikon D750 with Sigma 150-600mm
280mm, 1/320 sec, f/8, ISO 3200*



**Zebras,
Etosha National Park, Namibia**

*Nikon D610 with Sigma 150-500m
380mm, 1/320 sec, f/10, ISO 200*



**Egret,
Rundu Namibia**

*Nikon D750 with Sigma 150-600mm
480mm, 1/1600 sec, f/6.3, ISO 640*



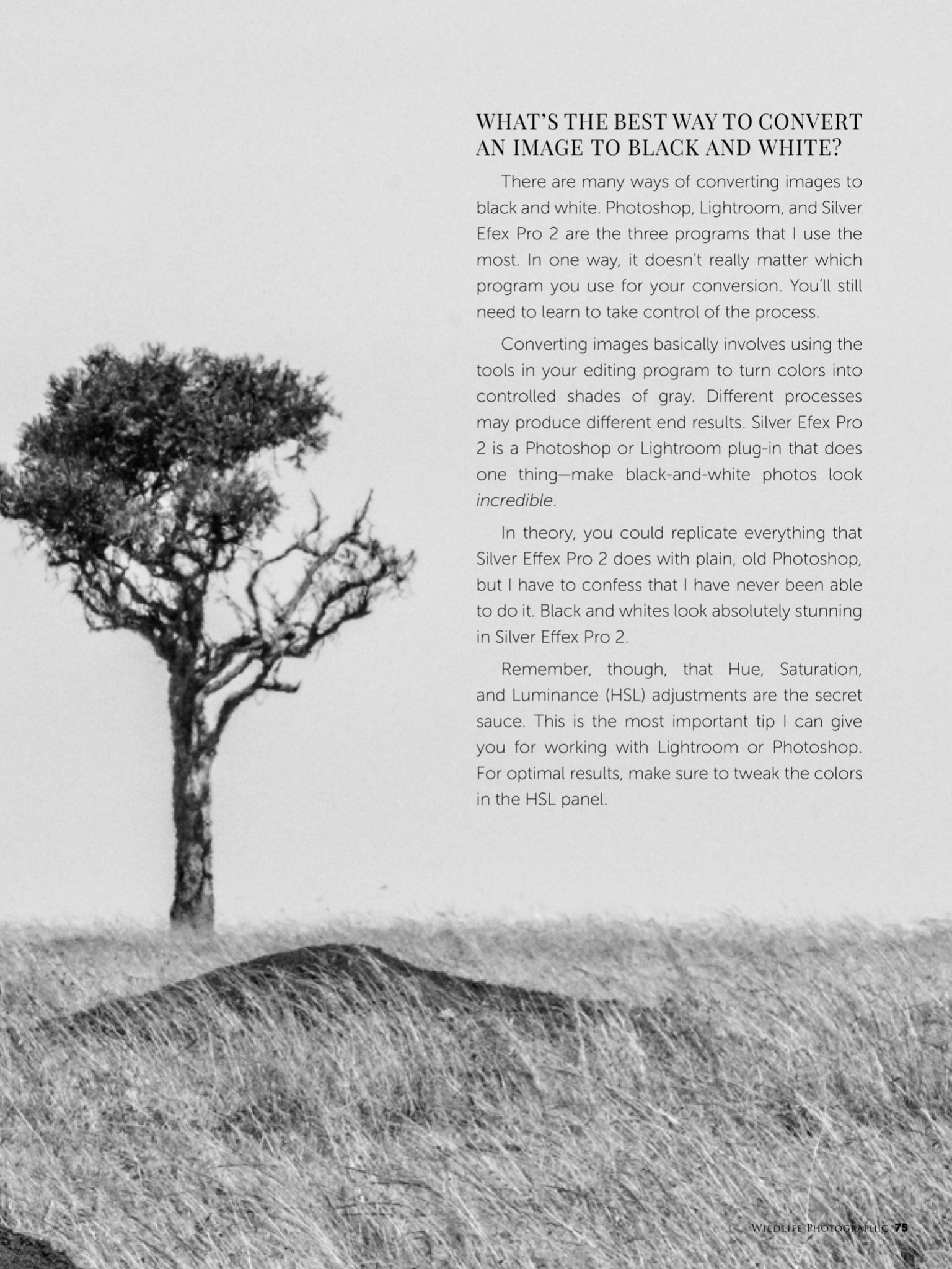
**White Rhinos,
Zimanga, Natal**

*Nikon D750 with Sigma 150-600mm
350mm, 1/500 sec, f/6, ISO 2200*

**Topi,
Masai Mara, Kenya**

*Nikon D610 with Sigma 150-500mm
220mm, 1/500 sec, f/25, ISO 1600*





WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO CONVERT AN IMAGE TO BLACK AND WHITE?

There are many ways of converting images to black and white. Photoshop, Lightroom, and Silver Efex Pro 2 are the three programs that I use the most. In one way, it doesn't really matter which program you use for your conversion. You'll still need to learn to take control of the process.

Converting images basically involves using the tools in your editing program to turn colors into controlled shades of gray. Different processes may produce different end results. Silver Efex Pro 2 is a Photoshop or Lightroom plug-in that does one thing—make black-and-white photos look *incredible*.

In theory, you could replicate everything that Silver Effex Pro 2 does with plain, old Photoshop, but I have to confess that I have never been able to do it. Black and whites look absolutely stunning in Silver Effex Pro 2.

Remember, though, that Hue, Saturation, and Luminance (HSL) adjustments are the secret sauce. This is the most important tip I can give you for working with Lightroom or Photoshop. For optimal results, make sure to tweak the colors in the HSL panel.



**Buffalo,
Masai Mara, Kenya**

*Nikon D610 with Sigma 150-500mm
500mm, 1/250 sec, f/6.3, ISO 360*



**Egret,
Zimanga, Natal**

*Nikon D750 with Sigma 150-600mm
390mm, 1/500 sec, f/6, ISO 2800*



**Close-up of a Leopard,
Masai Mara, Kenya**

*Nikon D610 with Sigma 150-500mm
380mm, 1/2000 sec, f/6.3, ISO 3200*

Namaqua Chameleon

*Nikon D750 with Nikon 105mm Macro
105mm, 1/500 sec, f/13, ISO 450*



FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Pay special attention to noise. While most of us know to shoot with the lowest ISO possible in color photography, it's particularly important when it comes to black and white. There the noise created by a high ISO can become even more obvious.

Think "black and white" while in the field. Contrast is a major force behind black-and-white imagery. A bright animal on a dark background is an obvious choice, but also look for color contrasts that you can take advantage of in conversion. Visualizing in black and white makes you pay attention to lines, shadows, and shapes. In fine-art photography, everything starts in your head, inside you rather than in the outside world—in your mind and soul. Therefore, you need to have a "black-and-white mindset."

Embrace a longer day of shooting. Another advantage of black and white is that you can shoot longer in the day. Stronger contrast usually improves a black-and-white image. You can take successful captures well outside the "golden hour." Shadows or strong sidelight can really make a composition or emphasize the shape of an animal. Underexposing has its place, too. Backlighting can highlight the outline of a furry creature, or go the other direction and overexpose a portrait for a high-key effect. Also, the eye is more forgiving of blown highlights in black and white than in color where they can really distract.

One thing is for sure: Once you get into the "black and white headspace," your camera will express the character of the subject in an entirely different way.



**Lioness,
Mashatu, Botswana**

*Nikon D750 with Sigma 150-600mm
500mm, 1/200 sec, f/6.3, ISO 3200*





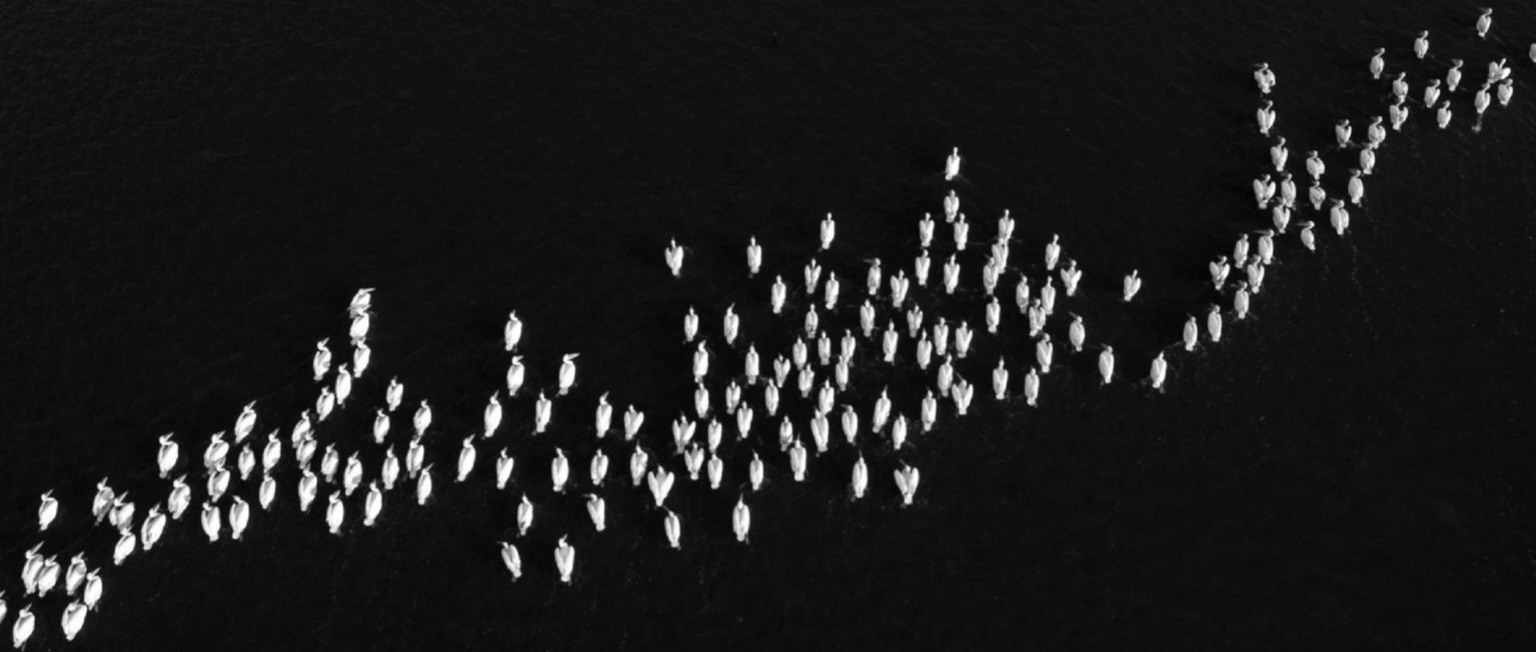
**Elephant Bull,
Mashatu, Botswana**

*Nikon D750 with
Sigma 150-600mm
220mm, 1/500 sec, f/6.3, ISO 3600*



**Palmato Gecko,
Swakopmund, Namibia**

*Nikon D750 with Sigma 150-600mm
390mm, 1/500 sec, f/6, ISO 2800*



**Aerial view of a group of Pelicans,
Walvis Bay, Namibia**

DJI Phantom 4

20.7mm, 1/2000 sec, f/2.8, ISO 100

WHAT MAKES FOR A STRONG BLACK-AND-WHITE IMAGE?

Texture is formed by contrast and tonality changes on a small scale. Contrast draws you into an image, but mid-grays will seduce and fascinate you. **Lines** lead our eyes about the composition, keeping them from getting stuck in one place. **Tonality** refers to the range of tones in an image—how many shades of gray there are, from featureless black to featureless white.

I find that black-and-white photography is a creative, artistic process not unlike molding clay. You can form it into a myriad of shapes. Black-and-white images can be strong, high contrast, and powerful—or they can be so soft, gentle, and subtle. The black and white versus color debate may be a very personal one, but one thing is certain at the end of the day: It's definitely a striking approach to the art of photography.

**Egret,
Zimanga, Natal**

*Nikon D750 with Sigma 150-600mm
360mm, 1/500 sec, f/6, ISO 220*



**About the Photographer
Anna-Mart Kruger**

iCapture Photo Safaris serves as an example to photographers who work full time that it's possible to have the best of both worlds. After several years of traveling through Africa and perfecting the art of wildlife, landscape, animalscape, and micro-photography, a passionate photography group consisting of Anna-Mart Kruger, Helene Wiggett, and Petri and Estelle Ackermann decided to share its members' passion and knowledge with others by organizing and hosting small and exclusive photo safaris in Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, Kenya, and Uganda. Their main objective is to make your photo safari dreams a reality even if you have a full-time career and see that you capture images which will add value to your portfolio.

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PHOTOGRAPHING THE FLYING FLOWERS

by Constance Mier

The butterfly has remained a popular photographic subject thanks to its colorful wings, and you can photograph these beautiful creatures in many locations. While most butterflies live in the tropics, they can be found almost anywhere depending on the season. And though you can hunt for butterflies in either the wilderness or urban parks and gardens, those aren't your only options. Dozens of butterfly houses and conservatories exist in the United States. These locations provide photographers with the opportunity to capture several species of butterflies within a small area. In my hometown, I have the privilege of photographing at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, which has an enclosed environment with thousands of butterflies. Inside the conservatory, I can count on having several butterflies in my field of view at any given time no matter which direction I look. Small wonder that the flying flowers have become a sought-after photo subject for me.



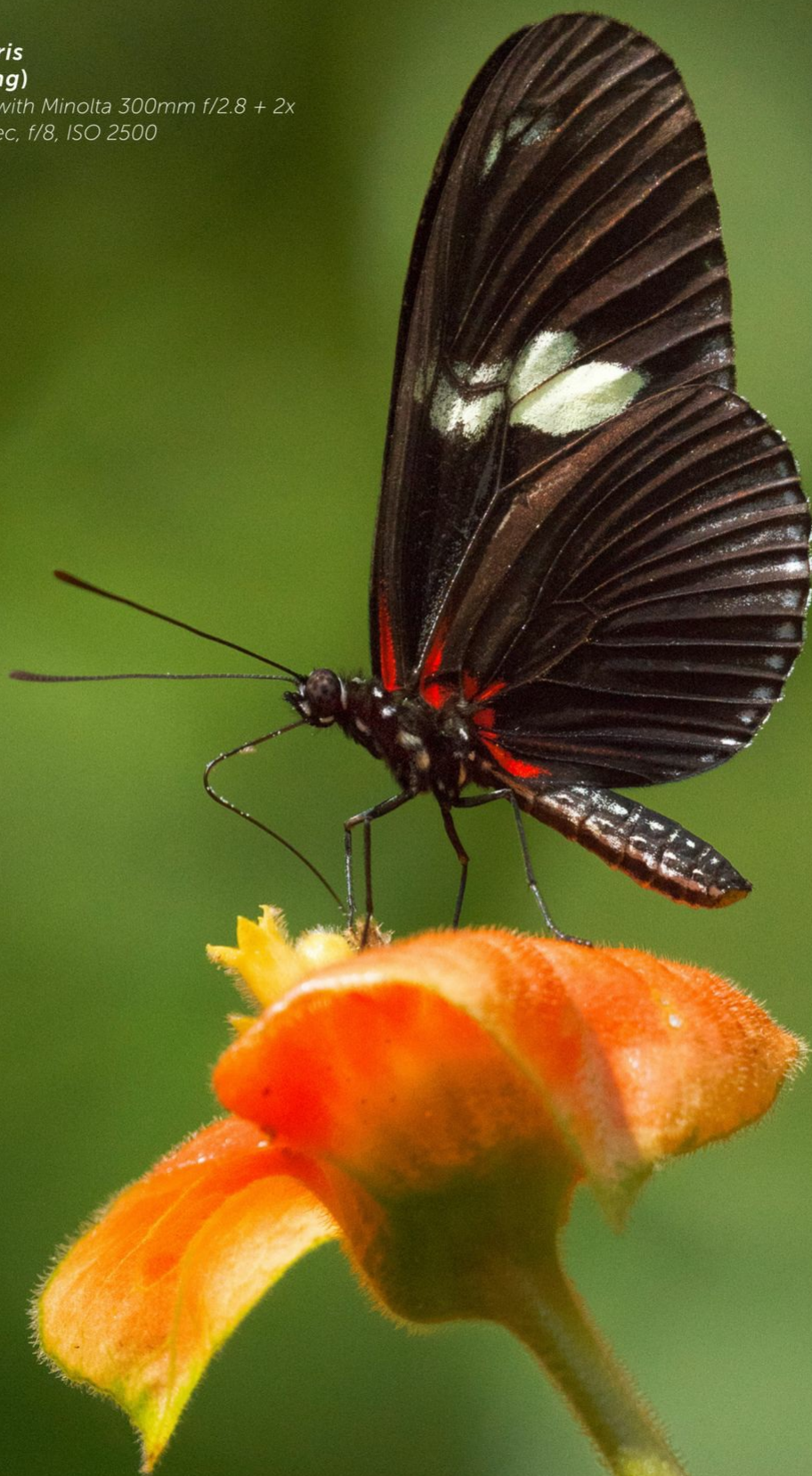
Leopard Longwing

Sony ILCA-77M2 with Minolta 300mm f/2.8 + 2x
600mm, 1/1250 sec, f/7.1, ISO 2500



Heliconius doris
(Doris longwing)

Sony ILCA-77M2 with Minolta 300mm f/2.8 + 2x
400mm, 1/640 sec, f/8, ISO 2500





Paper Kite

Sony ILCA-77M2 with Minolta 300mm f/2.8 + 2x
600mm, 1/320 sec, f/8, ISO 2000

Heliconius hecale
(Tiger longwing)

Sony SLT-A77V with Sigma f/2.8 Macro
1/200 sec, f/8, ISO 1000





“

“Butterflies are self-propelled flowers.” – **R.H. Heinlein**

”

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden advertises its butterfly conservatory as a “World of Fluttering Color.” Indeed, describing my first visit as “visual overload” hardly does it justice. At first, I had to stand back and simply take in the entire environment. The dense foliage grew in varying shapes, sizes, and colors. The air was alive with butterflies that flitted about constantly in no discernible pattern. I eventually began to settle in and look for specific butterflies to photograph. My first attempt was nothing more than “spray and pray.” I quickly realized that if I was going to capture a single butterfly, then I would have to do so at the moment it settled onto a flower. I began to strategize my next visit ...

Several years have passed since that first encounter, and I have refined my strategy for photographing butterflies, which helped me build my butterfly portfolio. Of course, there is always more to learn and experience, but I think I can share some useful

information with you that can help you capture butterflies and proudly display your images. If you don’t have access to butterflies or a desire to photograph them, you may still find my information applicable to other types of fast-moving wildlife.

When dealing with butterflies in their natural environment, remember that you’ll likely need to deal with dense foliage that has multiple colors, textures, shadows, and highlights. With this in mind, consider the following elements of a successful image: lighting, focus point, and composition. Working within a very busy environment can make it difficult to manage these three factors, but you can do it with a little thought and patience. More importantly, these best practices will carry over into all areas of your wildlife photography.

The fast, unpredictable, continuous movement of the butterfly presents an obvious challenge to managing lighting, focus point, and composition. Chasing one particular butterfly can prove next

Heliconius doris
(Doris longwing)

Sony ILCA-77M2 with Minolta 300mm f/2.8 + 2x
400mm, 1/320 sec, f/8, ISO 1000



to impossible. You will *not* keep up adequately with the butterfly. Even the best tracking camera can't maintain focus on a small object as it flits around a visually noisy environment. Therefore, it is better to focus on one or two landing locations and wait for a butterfly to fly into the frame. A flying butterfly can make a very nice image, but I prefer to see a flower, a clean background, and good light. If you work at it, you can end up with all that *and* a butterfly in flight.

Before I set my exposure and begin focusing on a butterfly, I choose a location, looking for flowers that receive front light and aren't overshadowed by neighboring plants. Keep in mind that early morning or late afternoon light, as well as overcast skies, best minimize highlights and shadows. I attempt to find a flower that stands out from the others when viewed at eye

level or higher. Looking through the viewfinder, I move around to get a perspective that will provide a relatively clean background. The entire background should preferably be several feet behind the flower so that it dissolves into an out-of-focus blur and contrasting colors blend together. We don't want them competing with the butterfly! I also choose a flower that doesn't look old and beat up. Then I pay attention to the butterflies and determine where they are landing. Within a short time, I have set my sight on one or two specific flowers.

Setting the correct exposure can be tricky with butterflies. Most of them have a combination of light and dark areas. Because I want the bright colors to pop, I'll set the exposure accordingly. This also brings out more detail in the dark areas.



Clipper

Sony ILCA-77M2 with Minolta
300mm f/2.8 + 2x
600mm, 1/320 sec, f/8, ISO 2000

Idea leucone
(Paper Kite)

Sony SLT-A77V with Sigma f/2.8 Macro
1/125 sec, f/14, ISO 800





However, the brightness and size of the flower in the frame will sometimes overpower the butterfly. Yellow, white, and pink flowers scream the loudest, and a less dramatic butterfly can seem secondary. This is why choosing the flower beforehand is so important. I find that a successful butterfly image doesn't emphasize only the butterfly; rather, the surroundings and the flower can be just as important. One more note about lighting:



Morpho peleides
(Common Morpho)

Sony ILCA-77M2 with Minolta 300mm f/2.8 + 2x
600mm, 1/320 sec, f/8, ISO 2500



Sometimes backlighting works really well. Butterfly wings are often transparent, and overhead or back lighting can bring this out. Take time to look around (and especially upwards!) so you can observe how the light interacts with the butterflies.

Once you have a flower in focus, watch and wait. As soon as a butterfly lands, begin focusing on its body. I always start with the head, which means I prefer the butterfly to face forward or sideways to the camera. I find that profile images work the best compositionally. Why? The butterfly is separated enough from the flower so that you can see the underside of the wing, head, abdomen, antennae, legs, and proboscis. The proboscis sometimes ends up covered in bright yellow or white pollen, which adds interesting detail to the scene. Additionally, a profile places the wings and body on the same plane, making it more likely that you'll get the entire butterfly in focus. Take as many shots as you can before the butterfly flits. Some are more generous with their time than others, and if one lands on a flower, others will too. Be patient! As long as you have good lighting and a clean background, you can capture several butterflies and in varying positions relative to the flower.

An external flash can help with shadowy settings. I most often find myself shooting in low light thanks to foliage blocking the sun. Unfortunately,

I can't use flash inside the conservatory, which forces me to increase my ISO setting. I prefer to shoot at f8, the sharpest aperture for my lenses and camera. It provides adequate depth of field. However, I have used apertures as wide as f5.6 and as narrow as f14. Because I am working with a very fast moving subject, I prefer high shutter speeds. I have used them as low as 1/125 when the butterfly is settled on a flower and as fast as 1/1600 when attempting flight shots. So keeping my aperture and shutter speed requirements in mind, I have to compensate by using an ISO setting of 1600 or higher.

After a little time has passed, you'll find that you can begin to anticipate your shots. This means that you might capture a butterfly in flight next to the flower. I find that flight shots are easier to anticipate when the butterfly takes off from the flower instead of trying to capture them landing. This is because you've already focused on the butterfly. Often, the butterfly will take off, hover, and come back to the flower. It may do that a few times before leaving. Sometimes another butterfly will appear in the frame and the two will compete for the same space. Being ready and having a fast shutter speed is crucial. It also helps to have space in the frame for the butterfly to fly into the moment it takes off. If you want to capture a flying butterfly, give yourself that breathing room by reducing the focal length or stepping back.

When you first begin photographing butterflies, it can be very frustrating to compose a good image. But practice can teach you a few things. Once you have a flower and background in place, frame the image before a butterfly lands and explicitly think about where you want the flower and the butterfly in the frame. I use flexible spot focus, which allows me to move the focus point within the frame while maintaining continuous autofocus. Once I have a composition in mind, I set the focus point to where I want the butterfly's head in the frame. Obviously, the butterfly will move around, so I try to adapt my focusing position accordingly, only shooting when the butterfly is in an ideal position with its wings in view.



Parthenos sylvia
(Clipper)

Sony ILCA-77M2 with Minolta 300mm f/2.8 + 2x
600mm, 1/320 sec, f/8, ISO 2000

When composing an image, I think in two ways: horizontal and vertical. I find that vertical shots work very well with profile images of butterflies sitting on top of a vertically standing flower, especially the long-wing species. Not all flowers stand vertically. That's why it's best to have the choice of both horizontal and vertical shots. Here is where equipment becomes important. I have a vertical grip attached to my main camera body, and I use a monopod with a ballhead. Once I'm set up, I can easily switch between horizontal and vertical shots. Though this compositional choice is really personal preference, the end result should illustrate the butterfly in the best way possible.

Also, consider using out-of-focus foregrounds to frame the butterfly or to get that soft, "dreamy" effect you often see in macro photography. I look for a flower where a foreground leaf lies at the level of or just below the flower. I prefer the out-of-focus object to not obstruct



Heliconius melpomene
(Postman)

Sony SLT-A77V with Sony 70-400mm f/4-5.6
400mm, 1/1600 sec, f/8, ISO 1600



Postman

*Sony ILCA-77M2 with Sony 70-400mm f/4-5.6
400mm, 1/640 sec, f/5.6, ISO 2000*

***Heliconius numata*
(Numata Longwing)**

*Sony SLT-A77V with Sony 70-400mm f/4-5.6
400mm, 1/640 sec, f/8, ISO 1600*





Cethosia cyane
(Leopard Longwing)

Sony SLT-A77V with Sigma f/2.8 Macro
1/800 sec, f/8, ISO 1600

the butterfly's wings, but to appear just enough to frame it. I have heard of photographers using clear or colored plastic bags with an opening attached to the lens to get this effect. Another technique involves cutting a hole in a leaf or arranging paper so it frames the subject. But this isn't always feasible, of course. In the conservatory, I'm in tight quarters and not alone, so I can't construct a controlled environment. Instead, I look for natural frames. I find that using a telephoto lens provides more compositional leverage, letting me capture butterflies from a greater distance and more easily find out-of-focus foregrounds with which to frame my subjects.

Regarding lenses and focal length, I have photographed butterflies using a 70-400mm,

a 600mm, and a 180mm macro lens. While the macro lens allows me to get very close to a butterfly, I find that the telephoto lenses give me many more options thanks to the greater distance between me and the flowers that stand out from the foliage. Since I am confined to a walking path, the greater the focal length, the better for me. This is where a monopod (no room for a tripod here!) helps to stabilize the larger lens.

If you have not photographed butterflies, prepare yourself for a humbling experience. At the very least, think of these fast subjects as target practice for high-speed photography. But really, once you spend time with them and learn their behaviors, you will fall in love with the flying flowers.

Sony ILCA-77M2 with
Sony 70-400mm f/4-5.6
400mm, 1/1250 sec, f/8, ISO 2500



About the Photographer Constance Mier

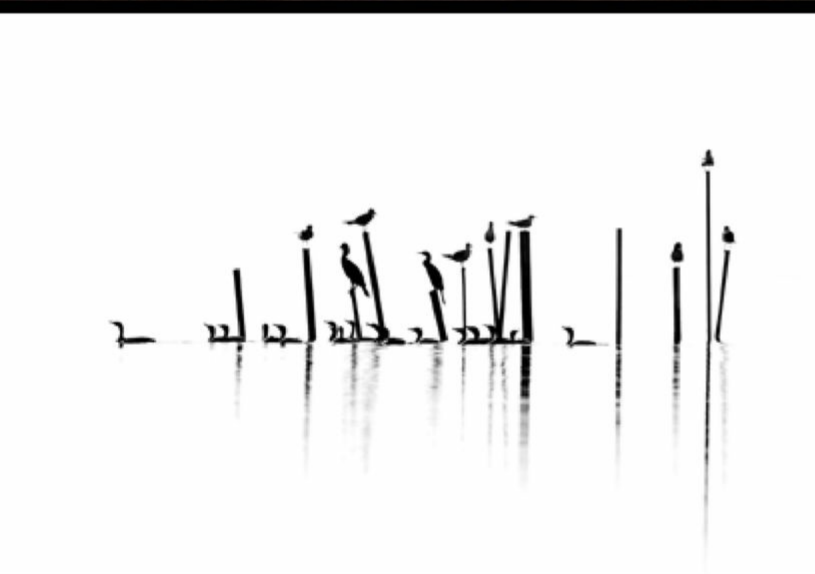
Constance Mier is a wildlife and nature photographer who derives inspiration from her canoe explorations. Living in Miami, Florida, she can easily access the Everglades and Biscayne Bay, the two areas where she spends most of her time photographing. She often spends several days at a time paddling in the Everglades, capturing images in the remotest places that are accessible only by canoe or kayak. As a result, her photographs offer a rare glimpse of these beautiful wilderness areas as seen from a canoe.

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A mother approaches a water hole with two calves, one enthusiastically raising its trunk as a greeting to its relatives.

*Canon 7D with Canon 100mm f/2.8 Macro
100mm, 1/80 sec, f/4.0, ISO 400*



A photograph of two elephants in a savanna setting. One elephant is in the foreground, facing left, with its trunk lowered towards a muddy watering hole. Another elephant is partially visible behind it. The background shows dry, sandy ground with sparse green bushes and trees under a clear sky.

CAPTURING BEHAVIOUR: **SOCIAL DRINKING**

by Tim Plowden



One drinking Elephant frames another in the background.

*Canon 7D with Canon 100mm f/2.8 Macro
100mm, 1/400 sec, f/4.0, ISO 400*

Photographing the drinking behaviour of elephants will offer the wildlife photographer more than just information on hydration. It provides charming insights into the family lives of the largest land mammals on the planet. Elephants aren't the only mammals of the savannah that drink communally at water holes and rivers during the dry season in Africa. Many species of antelope, primate, and lion congregate in family groups to drink. Spending a few days at a water source will provide rich photographic rewards to the patient and observant.

During my three months in Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, I photographed elephants at various national parks. It wasn't until I visited Elephant Sands, a man-made water hole in Botswana, that I had the opportunity to study the intimate behaviour of elephants up close. It was such a fascinating experience that I decided to stay longer than the weekend I'd originally planned.

Elephants' drinking behaviour around the water hole can at first seem commonplace. They choose to drink (and bathe) every day, although they can go several days without the former. They use their immensely strong trunks as tools to drink with. Inside the elephant's trunk, a unique arrangement of some 40,000 muscles allows for remarkable feats of finely tuned agility. (The human body, by comparison, has 639 muscles.) Muscles around the circumference

of the trunk regulate its volume by expanding and contracting the space inside. Expanding the trunk is essential for sucking up water—up to a full 9.4 litres of it! Using the muscles running along the underneath of their unique appendage, elephants lift the weight of their water-filled trunks to shoot the water into their mouths with ease.

The longer I spent watching the elephants gather and drink together, the more I understood their behaviour. Elephants are highly intelligent animals, and I began to notice subtleties about the interactions between individuals. At close range, you can see just how adaptable their trunks are. They use their trunks to communicate with other family members as part of a greeting ceremony, during which a lower ranking elephant inserts its trunk tip into the mouth of the other. This ritual enables elephants to come closer together amicably. You can see the roots of this behaviour when a calf places its trunk into its mother's mouth. There is possibly nothing more endearing in the animal kingdom than the maternal care of an elephant. Despite their size, elephants are surprisingly gentle around calves, mothers protecting their offspring with doting care as the calves nudge in close beneath their sheltering bodies.

Elephants are contact animals and seem to be very comfortable leaning against each other while drinking. When they huddle together to drink, they appear to revel in the close proximity





**A family group, including a calf,
drink together at a water hole.**

*Canon 7D with Canon 100mm f/2.8 Macro
100mm, 1/200 sec, f/4.0, ISO 400*




**Close-up portrait of an
African Elephant drinking water.**

*Canon 7D with Canon 300mm f/2.8
300mm, 1/400 sec, f/4.0, ISO 400*



Close-up detail
of an African Elephant
drinking water

Canon 7D with Canon 300mm f/2.8
300mm 1/250 sec f/2.8 ISO 400



of their members. Look out for courting elephants as they caress and twine their trunks. Something else to keep an eye out for is the joyous greeting intention when one elephant holds its trunk out towards an approaching elephant. Relatives greet each other intensely after even short periods of separation.

With such an intelligent animal, you'll find a lot of complexity to unravel. The challenge as a photographer is to capture the moment and try to predict when something will happen. It paid to allow myself time to observe the comings and goings of family members at the water hole. This let me find the best vantage points to shoot from, as well as explore different angles. Also, when you work up close with such a large mammal, you don't really need a big lens. I did use my 300mm lens to create tightly framed compositions and to zoom in on details, textures, and shapes. For some shots, a slightly higher perspective allowed for views not otherwise possible. In general, though, I found either eye-level or ground-level shots the most pleasing. This did mean plucking up the courage to sit a few metres in front of these immensely powerful giants. In many cases, working with the subject is an adventurous endeavour!



**Close-up detail of an
African Elephant drinking water.**

*Canon 7D with Canon 300mm f/2.8 + 1.4x
420mm, 1/640 sec, f/4.0, ISO 400*

Close-up detail of an
African Elephant trunk

Canon 7D with Canon 300mm f/2.8 L IS II
420mm, 1/400 sec, f/5.6, ISO 400



About the Photographer

Tim Plowden

Tim Plowden was born in 1973 in Berkshire, England. He grew up on the edge of the Chiltern Hills, always close to nature. Tim now lives in Singapore. He chose photography to express his emotional connection with the natural world. He combines his love of travel with documenting wildlife and conservation stories. Tim has won two film awards for his first short nature documentary, *The Return Of The Salmon*. The production received its London premiere at the British Documentary Film Festival in June 2015. His work has appeared in exhibitions, books, interior design showrooms, newspapers, magazines, and online.

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A black bear is the central focus, standing in a shallow stream. The bear's dark fur is wet and glistening. The stream is filled with a thick layer of dry, golden-brown pine needles. Several dark, smooth rocks are scattered throughout the water and along the banks. The background is a dense forest of evergreen trees, with some branches hanging down over the water. The lighting is soft and natural, suggesting a forest environment.

THE BLACK BEARS

OF THORNTON CREEK
**AND THE CHALLENGE
OF STAYING FOCUSED**

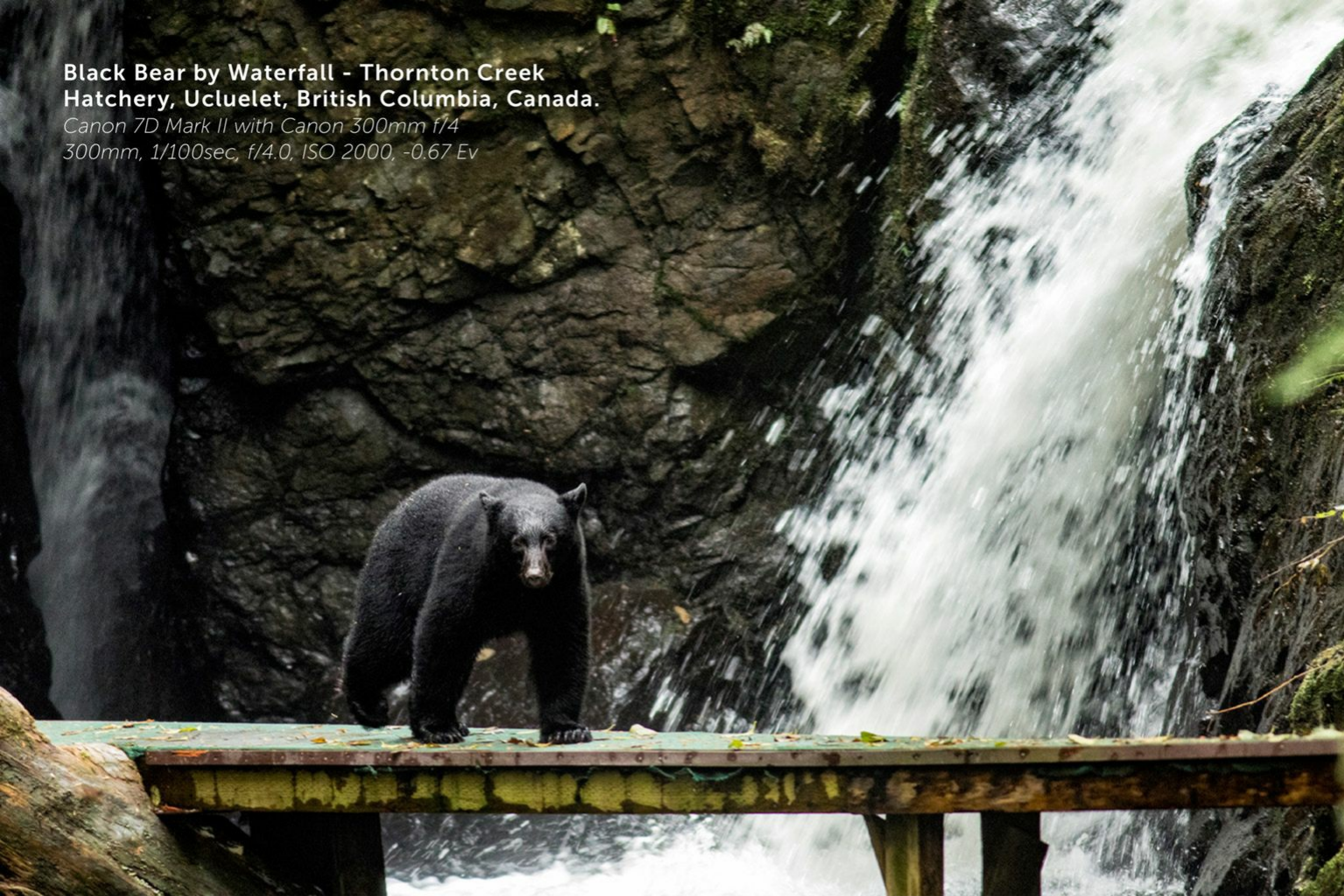
by Bill Gozansky

Adult Black Bear - Thornton Creek
Hatchery, Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada.

Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 300mm f/4
300mm, 1/400sec, f/4.0, ISO 1000, -0.67 Ev

Black Bear by Waterfall - Thornton Creek Hatchery, Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada.

Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 300mm f/4 300mm, 1/100sec, f/4.0, ISO 2000, -0.67 Ev



Picture the scene with me. A belted kingfisher flies erratically down a creek, its chattering call echoing through the forest. Soothing sounds of water rushing over rocks emanate from a nearby waterfall, and a mother black bear watchfully leads her two inquisitive cubs down to the water's edge. A bald eagle soars gracefully in the gray Pacific Northwest sky, quite literally above it all. It's just another day at Thornton Creek Hatchery right outside the town of Ucluelet on the wild Pacific coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

Both the bears and I are a couple of weeks early for the massive salmon run that will inundate this creek in mid-October, but today the ursine explorers are on their daily rounds to see if any fish have made an early arrival. The mother bear walks along the water's edge, turning rocks in

search of food as the cubs playfully follow along and imitate the sow's behavior. The bears are seemingly oblivious to the eager photographers and devoted bear watchers that line the boardwalk along the creekside.

Black bear photography is no easy task, especially in the dark recesses of a forested river. It generally requires high ISOs to achieve enough shutter speed to arrest the motion of the foraging bears. For me, ISO 1000 to ISO 2000 was the go-to range under the prevailing gray skies. Even at these relatively high ISOs, though, I couldn't get an optimal shutter speed, but there's always a trade off when trying to avoid excessive digital noise in such low-light conditions. Black bears themselves are difficult subjects to photograph due to their uniformly black coloration, which (among other things) makes their eyes very

**Black Bear Cub - Thornton Creek Hatchery,
Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada.**

*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 300mm f/4
300mm, 1/80sec, f/4.0, ISO 1600, -0.67 Ev*



**Black Bear Cub - Thornton Creek Hatchery,
Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada.**

*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 300mm f/4
300mm, 1/400sec, f/4.0, ISO 1600, -0.67 Ev*





Black Bear Cub Walking by Creek - Thornton Creek Hatchery, Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada.

Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 300mm f/4 300mm, 1/1000sec, f/4.0, ISO 1600, -0.67 Ev



difficult to see unless the light catches them just right. Low light and a very dark subject is a tough combination for the camera's metering and autofocus systems. Generally, I found that dialing down the exposure compensation by -2/3 stop (when using evaluative metering) compensated for the predominantly black bear and resulted in a proper exposure that didn't blow out the highlights of the scene.

Although such photography is technically challenging, it's also good fun. The adult bears are awe inspiring with their large size and immense claws. The cubs are absolutely adorable with their playful antics and insatiable curiosity. One of my favorite encounters occurred when a young cub found the remains of a salmon in a forested area just off the boardwalk from where I was standing. Hungry and inquisitive, the cub

tried eating the remnants of this old carcass. To my surprise, it stood up on its hind legs and balanced itself against a tree as it began to tear the fish apart. I had no time to think. There's this split second when you can get caught *watching* something unexpected through the camera rather than *shooting* it. Fortunately, my photographic instincts took over, and I pressed the shutter button. However, the focus didn't lock on the bear for the first few frames. I felt it seek and knew the frames wouldn't be sharp. This induces a kind of panic that I'm sure is familiar to many wildlife photographers. You're watching something amazing through your viewfinder that you know might only last for a few seconds or perhaps just fractions of a second—and you can't get your camera to focus! With a quick adjustment to my focus point selection, the



**Black Bear Cub Standing -
Thornton Creek Hatchery,
Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada.**

*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 300mm f/4
300mm; 1/60sec, f/4.0, ISO 1600, -0.67 Ev*



**Black Bear Cub Standing -
Thornton Creek Hatchery,
Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada.**

*Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 300mm f/4
300mm, 1/100sec, f/4.0, ISO 1600, -0.67 Ev*



Warning Sign - Electric Fence - Thornton Creek Hatchery, Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada.

*Canon 1Ds Mark II with Canon 70-200mm f/2.8
145mm, 1/320sec, f/3.5, ISO 800*

camera's focusing system appeared to lock in. I hoped that I'd captured at least one sharp frame before the action was over. It all happened so quickly that I was really concerned I may have missed this incredible opportunity. Let me tell you that it was *quite* a relief when I reviewed my images and discovered that I'd gotten a couple of successful shots. Remember this: When you have a camera capable of shooting up to 10 frames a second, two successful frames is not that many! However, it is never about the quantity for me. I just wanted to make sure I had at least one quality image of this little bear cub standing up. And luckily, I did!

Overall, the photography experience at Thornton Creek Hatchery is great. The hatchery has recently installed electric fencing around the base and sides of the boardwalk due to some issues with inappropriate *human* behavior around the bears. In a sense, the fencing serves to keep the humans in as much as it serves to keep the bears out. Ultimately, the Thornton Creek Hatchery provides a safe environment for both the humans and bears to coexist in this amazing setting. It is definitely worth a stop if you find yourself on the west coast of Vancouver Island. To learn more, visit <https://www.facebook.com/ThorntonCreekHatchery/>.



About the Photographer

Bill Gozansky

Bill Gozansky is a travel, nature, and wildlife photographer based in south Florida. Bill's quest for images enables him to explore unique destinations and interact with diverse cultures across the globe. He currently leads photographic safaris to Namibia, Kenya, Costa Rica, and Ecuador. In a private or small group setting, Bill teaches field techniques of professional travel, nature, and wildlife photography in these remarkable natural areas. Bill's award-winning images have been exhibited in galleries, published in many periodicals and books, and sold as fine art prints to private collectors. Bill has recently created the *Images for Conservation Fund Photo Guide Series: Nature & Travel Photography* app that illustrates professional photographic techniques for nature and travel photography.



**Black Bear Sow and Cub -
Thornton Creek Hatchery,
Ucluelet, British Columbia, Canada**

Canon 7D Mark II with Canon 70-200mm f/2.8
95mm, 1/640sec, f/3.2, ISO 1250, -0.67 Ev



CONSERVATION

An underwater photograph showing a diver on the left side, swimming over a rocky seabed. In the background, there are ancient stone structures, possibly part of a Mayan or Aztec ruin, partially submerged. Sunlight rays penetrate the water from the surface, creating a dramatic effect. The water is clear and blue-green.

MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER DESTINATION

Photo Credit:
Sustainable Travel International
Diving in Tulum, Mexico

Photo Credit:
Sustainable Travel International
Toucan in Tree





**SUSTAINABLE
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Making A Better World The Destination

PROTECTING THE EARTH'S most vulnerable ecosystems and communities through the power of travel and tourism.

Humans are a nomadic species, one driven by a thirst for recreation, connection, and contemplation. Every year, over a billion travelers journey to distinct corners of the globe, discovering astonishing natural landscapes and crossing paths with people of varying cultural backgrounds.

But beyond the jungle treks, beach resorts, and sightseeing, many of the world's most remarkable destinations and the people who live there face serious threats. Climate change. Natural resource depletion. Extreme poverty. Careless tourism activity. These issues are some of the planet's most pressing challenges. Vital habitats such as coral reefs and rainforests are being destroyed at alarming rates. Litter and pollution overrun urban centers and sensitive natural environments. Marginalized communities fall further into poverty thanks to rising income inequality, and the cultural traditions of indigenous peoples start to vanish.

Photo Credit:
Sustainable Travel International
Rainforest



Fortunately, this doesn't have to be the reality. The nonprofit organization [Sustainable Travel International](#) cultivates an often overlooked side of the travel and tourism industry. As one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world, tourism wields great power that can be channeled into a force for global good.

For example, since tourism tends to flourish in biodiversity hotspots, the industry has the unique potential to advance environmental conservation and enhance protection of some of the world's most remarkable species. Tourism can also spur sustainable development such as improved waste management and sanitation infrastructure. The industry supports one in 11 workers around the globe and is a key means of

bringing foreign money into economies, making it a powerful tool for job creation and poverty alleviation in developing countries.

Since 2002, Sustainable Travel International has sought to ensure healthier environments, greater economic opportunity, social justice, and the protection of natural and cultural resources. The organization works hand in hand with communities, companies, destinations, governments, and NGOs to create a better path forward for some of the world's most vulnerable destinations such as the Galapagos Islands, Chile's Torres del Paine, Indonesia, and the Mesoamerican Reef. The following examples illustrate the powerful impact that tourism can have in preserving these sensitive environments.

Preventing deforestation in Indonesia

From combating climate change to providing fresh water for local communities, the vast expanses of tropical forest covering much of [Indonesia](#) represent a precious and vital natural resource. These forests and peat swamp areas are home to diverse groups of wildlife, including critically threatened species such as orangutans and Sumatran elephants. Unfortunately, these habitats also face some of the highest rates of deforestation in the world.

To protect Indonesia's forests and the wildlife within them, Sustainable Travel International is

helping communities around protected areas in Kalimantan, Sumatra, and Papua develop ecotourism as an additional livelihood option. Ecotourism plays a valuable role in educating people about the environment and encourages a harmonious relationship between communities and natural areas. Since ecotourism depends on healthy, thriving ecosystems, developing these alternative livelihood opportunities will help prevent forest encroachment and motivate local communities to invest in the conservation of these threatened habitats.



Protecting the second longest coral reef

On the opposite side of the globe, another ecosystem of immense biological significance lies beneath the ocean's surface. As the second longest reef in the world, the Mesoamerican Reef stretches for 600 miles (965 kilometers) along the coast of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras. This massive reef ecosystem supports a wealth of marine life, including 500 species of fish and 60 species of coral. Tourism draws millions of visitors to the region each year, placing enormous pressure on the reef. Careless tourism activities as well as contaminants from hotels and boats destroy the coral and threaten marine life.



Photo Credit:
Sustainable Travel International
Snorkeling over
degraded coral reef



Photo Credit:
Sustainable Travel International
Coral in Cozumel



Photo Credit:
Sustainable Travel International
Garbage on Beach

In response to these concerns, the Mesoamerican Reef Tourism Initiative ([MARTI](#)) was established in 2006. For the past two years, Sustainable Travel International has led MARTI's efforts to engage government, hotels, cruise ships, and marine recreation providers in the adoption of responsible practices that protect and restore the health of the Mesoamerican Reef. More than 130 hotels and 80 marine tourism companies have joined the initiative, all taking concrete steps to reduce water pollution, cut carbon emissions, and increase local livelihoods. Today, MARTI is one of the largest initiatives of its kind in the region.



Photo Credit:
Sustainable Travel International
Marine Iguana in Galapagos

Helping travelers create positive impact

While notable progress has been made toward ensuring that environments and communities continue to thrive, achieving maximum impact means that tourists must make more responsible travel decisions. In addition to its work at specific destinations, Sustainable Travel International helps travelers become more aware of their impact and how they can benefit the people and places they visit. The organization recently launched the Travel Better Club to enable travelers to engage in more responsible travel habits. Club members can explore their impacts on communities and environments through an online learning module that covers a range of topics from conserving resources and choosing

responsible service providers to interacting with wildlife and respecting local culture. In addition to the Travel Better Club, Sustainable Travel International is collaborating with TripAdvisor on a new wildlife tourism education portal that will raise traveler awareness about animal welfare issues and prevent tourism activities that harm wildlife.

The first step to more sustainable travel can be as simple as doing your research and understanding the issues. To learn more or get involved in the important work of preserving environments and improving lives, visit sustainabletravel.org.



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