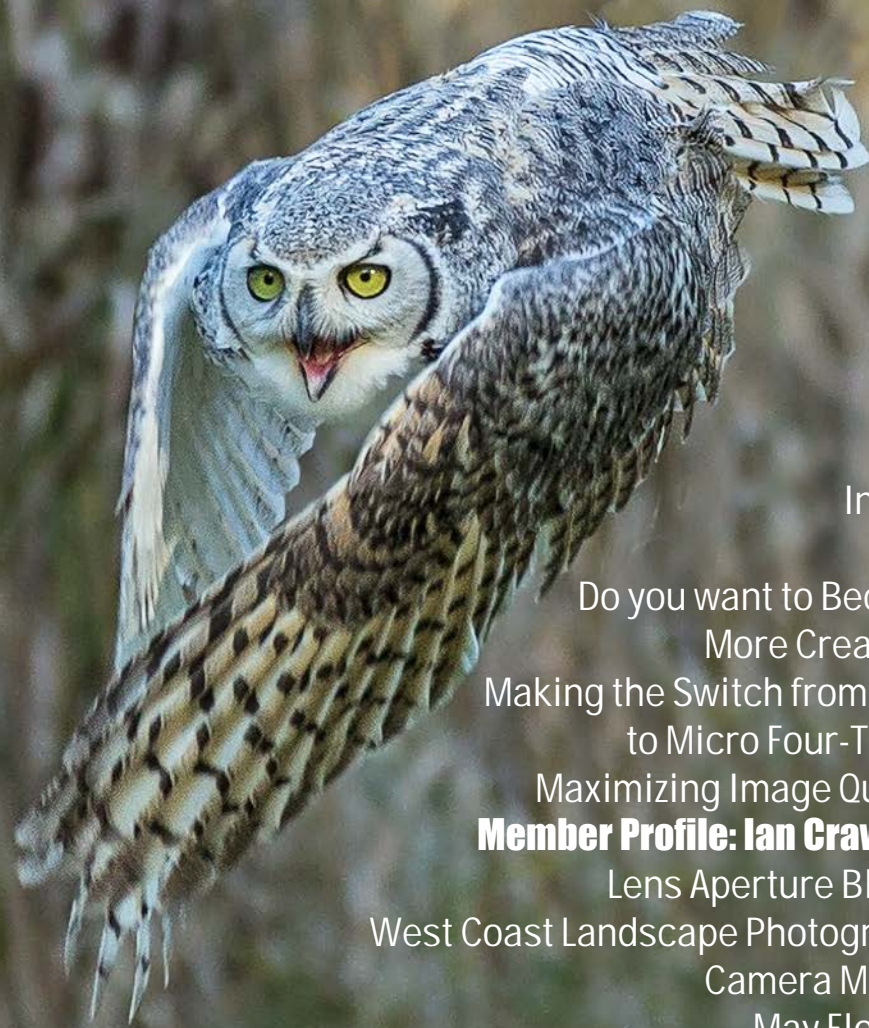




# Close-Up



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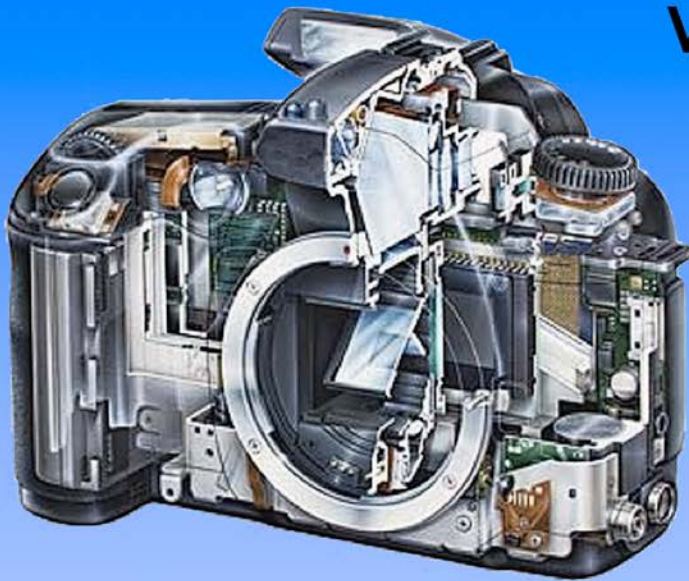
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"Great Horned Owl" by Doug Cronk





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## Victoria Camera Club

*Close-Up* is the magazine of the Victoria Camera Club,  
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 Mailing address: PO Box 46035, RPO Quadra, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7.  
 Deadline for submissions for the July/August 2015 issue is May 5<sup>th</sup> 2015.  
 Editor, Richard James, e-mail to [newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org](mailto:newsletter@victoriacameraclub.org)  
 for submissions or to advertise in *Close-Up*.

Established in 1944, the Victoria Camera Club is a group of people who share the love of photography. We come together to appreciate each other's images, to learn, both from the feedback on our own images and from the images of others, and to exchange tips on how and where to take effective photographs. Our focus is on continuous learning. Our media include both film and digital and our expertise ranges from novice to master.

### Events

We hold a number of events including:

- Three meetings a month from September to April (excluding December)
- Field trips
- Workshops
- Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Competitions within the club and externally

Meetings begin at 7:30 PM at Norway House, 1110 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC.

### Membership

Annual fees include all workshops (except studio shoots and special events), meetings and all field trips unless travel/accommodation is involved. Annual fees are: Individual, \$85; Family, \$128; Student, \$43.

For current event information and locations please go to the website [victoriacameraclub.org](http://victoriacameraclub.org) where you can also read or download the colour version of *Close-Up*.

For additional information: please contact the appropriate Committee Chair:

*Membership:* [membership@victoriacameraclub.org](mailto:membership@victoriacameraclub.org)  
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 or call Lloyd Houghton, President at 250-580-7154.

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**Member Discounts:** VCC members can take advantage of discounts offered by several retailers in Victoria. Details are on the members only page on our website.

The Victoria Camera Club is a member club of the Community Arts Council of Greater Victoria (CACGV), Canadian Association for Photographic Arts (CAPA), and the Photographic Society of America (PSA).



## Calendar

Our workshop and field trip program is too extensive to list in *Close-Up*. Please go to the calendar page on the website ([www.victoriacameraclub.org](http://www.victoriacameraclub.org)) for the latest details of all our workshops, field trips and meetings.

### Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>; Annual Competition and Awards Night

The annual competition results will be presented. One of the judges will review selected images. The Club's Frank Turner award will also be presented to a member for exceptional service to the club.

Our monthly meetings will resume on September 10<sup>th</sup> and will be on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays for September only.

### Featured Workshops in May

Introduction to Photoshop for Lightroom Users.

Intimidated by Studio Lights?

### Featured Field Trips in May and June

Olympic Peninsular (May) and the Palouse (June)

### Meeting, field trip and workshop visitor policy:

Visitors are welcome to attend any three events in a two-month period subject to the availability of space and a \$20 per session fee for workshops.

**Cover image:** "Great Horned Owl" by Doug Cronk. This image was one of six images forming the Club's entry in the "North Shore Challenge - 2015" It received the "Best in Show" award.

The photo was taken at the Duncan Raptors Centre in November 2014. Although the birds are captive, the main purpose of the centre is educational, allowing visitors the opportunity not only to see and photograph the birds up close, but to observe their behaviour in a reasonably natural setting.

My challenge for this shot was to capture the owl in poor light conditions but with a high enough shutter speed, 1/2000 sec., to ensure reasonable detail. I also needed to shoot at f/2.8, spot metered, ISO 640, at 200 mm. The image needed a fair amount of post processing in Lightroom and Photoshop, requiring significant cropping. Normally, I would have used my 100-400 mm f5.6 lens (stopped down), but given the poor light, it would not have been usable (probably ISO 4000 or higher).

## President's Message

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of a very dear member of our Club, Brenda Jacques, early in April.

Brenda joined the Club in 2010 and was soon embedding herself into everything. She took trips, created slide-shows, won competitions, and served as Vice President in 2013. Her spontaneity always added adventure, while her sensitivity brought nuance to her work.

Brenda approached photography as an artist, meaning imagination always working on more than one level. An example was her haunting slideshow of an ancient, mythical city designed solely from photos of an industrial area, utterly original in approach and impact.

In the President's Challenge team project her ingenuity, starting with props, launched many "left field" ideas. Then a red clown-nose prompted even more mischief. Her fearless improvisation gave us license to experiment.

The Tuesday morning shooters, where she regularly met and made a lot of friends, loved her too. Garry Schaeffer recalls, "Brenda had a great sense of fun which added so much to ours. Gregarious, she struck up conversations with all manner of people when on a shoot. We would learn of these encounters during lunch, or through tales told by those who were at her side that day. At Brenda's last shoot with the Tuesday group, Brenda made the rounds with a big hug for those of us present. She always promoted the Club. Her encounters sometimes led to the recruitment of new members and, in one case, to advice on technique from a New York street photographer visiting Victoria."

Then we are reminded how much we have loved Brenda's openness. Her heart was open to people, and her mind open to daring uniqueness. To consider this pairing of relatedness and imagination in our own selves now, is to pay respect to our friend, and share her gift to us.

To Brenda's family and friends outside of the Club, we pass on our condolences to you in this most difficult time. We know that what we experienced of Brenda in the short time she was a part of our Club's family was just a snippet of what you as family and friends are now missing. We wish you all the best as you move forward with life and know that, as we have, you have many treasured memories of Brenda to sustain you through the days ahead.

*Lloyd Houghton, President.*



by Lydia Dagg

Before I attempt to answer this question, I would like to quote a statement by the accomplished writer, photographer, award-winning stage and costume designer, Sir Cecil Beaton: "Be daring, be different, be impractical, be anything that will assert integrity of purpose and imaginative vision against the play-it-safers, the creatures of the commonplace, the slaves of the ordinary."

This, by no means, implies that you do not have to know the fundamentals of how your camera functions, the elements required to compose and capture a fleeting moment in time, nor the importance of connecting and interacting with your subject. Know how to use Photoshop, Lightroom, and your computer as best as you can. One has to master the fundamentals so that these tools become second-nature, or an extension of your fingers, your heart and soul, as well as your feelings and your mind. When one is in the creative zone, the right side of your brain has taken over and said to the more analytical left side of your brain: "Everything is okay, take a well-deserved break while I just play. If I need you, left brain, I will definitely call you." This will occur quite naturally if you allow yourself to "just play" regularly, with no expectations. Please also refer to a recent article of "Understand the Left and Right Brain" by Fine Art Photographer Sharon Tenenbaum featured in the Spring 2015 issue of CAPA's *Canadian Camera* magazine.



*"That Flying Cornet Mute" won an Honorable Mention in the North Shore Photographic Society Individual Competition in 2015. It was composited from a landscape by altering perspective, warping and additional manipulations and then combined with an image of a cornet.*

Yes, photography is art when it is in the hands of artists. Making choices in composition, knowing all the rules, and then to not be fearful to push every boundary while stretching and breaking rules in your quest to render in visual terms the feelings and the experiences that often

elude our ability to describe in words. Photography is the art of observation and finding something uniquely interesting in an ordinary place or subject matter and then combining it with the gift of light.

One of my art professors likened one's progress as a ladder without end. One must climb that ladder one rung at a time, take every risk and make every effort to get to the next rung, and then look back with delight at your progress, while yet another rung waits to be tackled. It is a never-ending process as you climb along your path with your unique vision, life experiences and feelings.



*This composite of model Kate incorporates an image of her, one of my paintings, as well as some graphic design elements that I created in Photoshop.*

Since I started photography 5½ years ago, I have created my own library of about 20,000 images of backgrounds, textures, colours, lines, curves, shapes, etc. taken in various light conditions. These are incorporated into composites in Photoshop to allow me to better express myself. Having my own library of elements to draw on makes compositing so much easier as I progress in my journey. That does not mean that every image one takes would necessarily benefit from compositing; it is just one of the many tools at your disposal if further expression or enhancing of an image is desirable.

Of course, you will reach roadblocks from time to time that indicate (by some authority or other) that an image is "over-manipulated" and no longer qualifies in a certain category of a competition. That is just as things in art photography should be as this art form unfolds and expands, and some day, those rules will also be changed. Ansel Adams would not have allowed himself to be cornered by rules, but would have welcomed Photoshop to express his feelings despite potential rejection of his work. He used his artistic skills of composition and mas-

tery of photography to express his feelings. He gave of himself and pushed every boundary without any concern for repercussions. The darkroom was his equivalent of Photoshop, and many feel that Ansel Adams would have embraced and used this very sophisticated and modern “darkroom” to its full extent, and would have expanded on Photoshop with the greatest joy and passion.

What touches your life, and which part of you is truly meaningful? What do you love, hate, or fear? It is often said that “Creativity is turning fear inside out.” You get there by doing what you may fear, and trust yourself to have fun or be adventurous. Creativity is playing like a child with no fear or expectations whatsoever, just knowing that nothing is expected and to only have fun for the sake of exploring. When you are in the creative zone, you totally lose track of time and anything can happen! Discover a joy and freedom unlike anything you can imagine.

A good friend recently suggested that I photograph street people. That did hit well below my comfort zone. Can I be that bold, and will I be safe? Fear set in, and yes, I will do this very, very soon!

One of my images of a Japanese merchant's ledger with beautiful oriental black script on cream paper appeared quite ordinary, but when I infused it with a myriad of colours and flipped it, adding leading lines and more textures, it took on a new life, a creative endeavour of which I am proud.



*The ledger comes to life when infused with a myriad of colours. The oriental script, however, is very graceful and artistic in both colour as well as black and white.*

At times you have very preconceived ideas of what you wish to create, but often, the pre-visualization is only the beginning and you will find yourself going far beyond

what you expected to be able to do. Always say “What if I try this or that?” When you think your image is complete, and you have safely secured it with “Save As,” start again and take it several steps further and see in what direction it leads you and does it have potential? Take it beyond your comfort level, and you can always go back to an earlier version. It's that easy, and you will learn to fly! Just explore!



*“Strings” Harpist Gwyneth Evans performs at a wedding in Victoria. This was created combining three separate images to tell the story of this gifted harpist.*

There is no need to find your style. When you apply the basic principles of good design (lighting, composition, leading lines, shapes, textures, colours, angles, etc.) and a good dash of creativity, you will naturally develop your own style without trying. Just play with reckless abandon.

So, what is creativity or art? It is the creation of a work of beauty or an expression of feelings that touches others. It is also considered a skill of the “non-scientific” branch of knowledge, not just supreme skill from hard work, but mixing in a very generous amount of imagination and play.

After you have finished practicing techniques that others before you have used, always make certain that you move on to develop something unique in our own approach and style. Use the tools in different ways by experimenting, inventing, and just playing. Yes, you can do this, just play and see where it leads you. You will amaze yourself!

*by Willie Waddell*

The decision to change camera systems does not come suddenly or easily; there are several factors involved. Some of us changed from film to digital more reluctantly than others. There are a growing number of photographers who are down-sizing to a new generation of Micro Four-third (M4/3) camera systems. In the six years since mirrorless cameras first appeared, over thirty-six M4/3 system and nineteen Sony E-mount cameras have been released under brands including Fuji, Nikon, Lumix, Olympus, Sony and Panasonic. There are entry-level to very advanced professional cameras with complicated menus and a steep learning curve.

I changed from a Nikon D800 full frame DSLR to an Olympus OMD EM-5 M4/3 system for a variety of reasons, some were very positive, others were concerns that I had to think about for longer. A feature which I especially like is the Electronic View finder (EVF) in M4/3 cameras which allows you to see things that the naked eye simply can't. It also allows you to magnify your view to clearly see what you're focusing on and to see into the dark, all in real time. You can see your camera settings, show overlays to see your histogram, etc. while taking your photos. You can also see the picture immediately after taking it without taking your eye away from the camera. This can be a big advantage over Optical Viewfinders found in DSLR's. You can also switch easily between the EVF and Live View.

Unfortunately, and costly to me, was that I didn't do my homework prior to switching over to the mirrorless system. Something that I failed to consider when purchasing the OMD EM-5 was the ergonomics and how the camera felt and functioned in my hands. Because of the size and the placement of dials and buttons I found it very awkward to use. I eventually had it converted to Infrared and upgraded to the next level camera, a OMD E-M1.

High-end M4/3 cameras offer many features that rival those of DSLR's such as good image stabilization (via the sensor, not in each lens), that is great for hand-held shots in low light or when travelling and you don't want to carry a tripod. Some offer improved auto focusing, rugged weatherproof bodies, electronic and optical viewfinders and full frame and APS-C sized sensors while still remaining relatively compact.

Sensor size is a consideration and the downside of M4/3 cameras is a smaller sensor size, 40% less than an APS-C and 75% less than a full frame camera, but unless you are cropping heavily, making huge prints

or require professional photos, the quality is quite acceptable. Having said that there are now M4/3 cameras such as the new Sony a7 and a7R which are the first autofocus-enabled full-frame mirrorless cameras.

Depth-of-Field is generally greater than with full frame or APS-C sensors so it can be more difficult to get a blurred background. This can be mitigated by using large-aperture prime lenses, for instance in portraits. Continuous Auto Focus was also problematic in earlier cameras but has improved in newer models e.g. the OMD EM-1.

Because I am a photo hobbyist and my major interests are street and travel photography, I love the freedom that smaller, lighter cameras give me and I have no regrets in changing cameras. Weight is a major consideration as about half my travel is solo and I have to secure my cameras on me. On a recent trip to India I carried 2 M4/3 bodies, a full selection of small, lightweight lenses and all my gear in one carry-on bag. It is a big thing to do this and hardly notice. Being able to carry both of my cameras at all times, creates more spontaneous shooting opportunities. With my old DSLR's and lenses I could not manage more than one camera.

I notice very little difference in image quality. Where I do notice a difference is that M4/3 sensors are often not the best in low light. They aren't bad, but a larger sensor will serve you better if you have to shoot at ISO's above 1600. Light is 95% of photography though, and I would encourage you to learn how to best light your subjects and then the high ISO limit becomes less important.

The prices of mirrorless cameras and lenses vary from cheaper entry level to high-end models that rival the cost of DSLR's. Performance expectations should always be a consideration when choosing either. Accessories including flashes, filters, light modifiers, and battery grips are increasingly becoming more available for the M4/3 system. Lenses vary greatly in quality and price. A f1.4 lens is much faster (lets in more light) than a f3.5 lens and will be more expensive. However it is still cheaper and lighter than a comparable DSLR lens. Choice of lenses will greatly impact the quality of your photos.

Both systems are capable of producing stunning results. Much of it boils down to what you are going to use them for. You might not need to spend thousands to get the results you need as an enthusiastic hobbyist, but for sports photography, professional use, or if you plan on printing really large images, a full frame DSLR is probably still the best choice. Ultimately you can't go wrong with either system. It is a personal choice.





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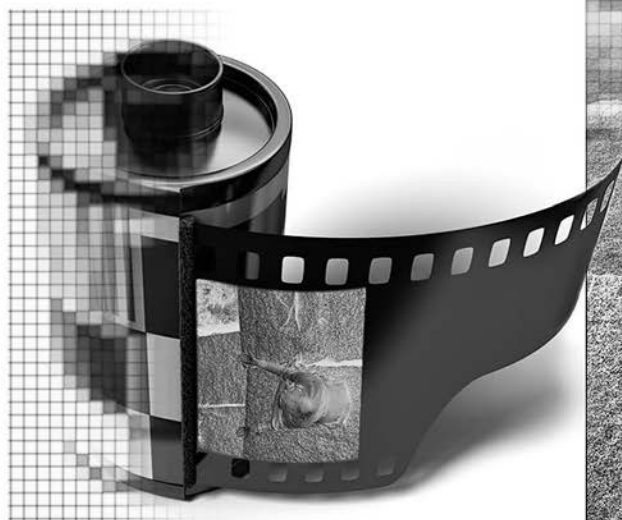
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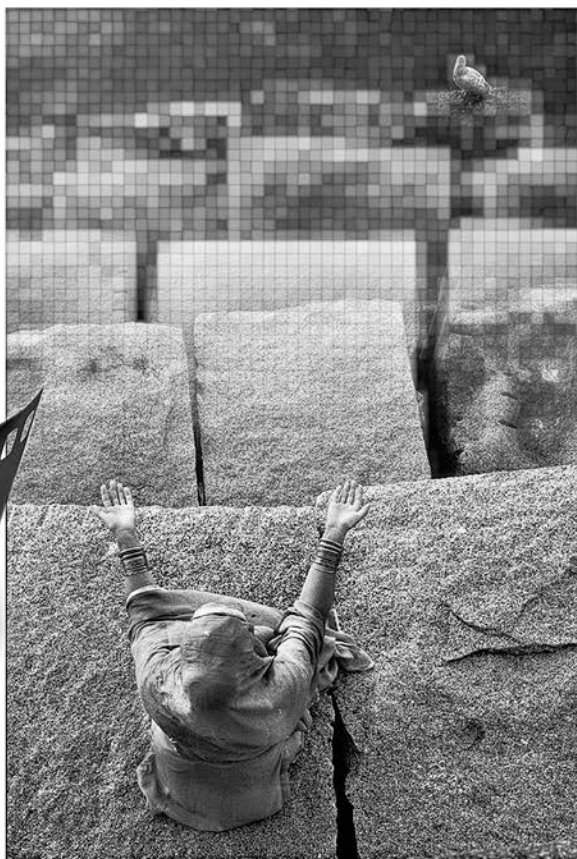
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by Richard James

This article is a sequel to the article in the September/October 2014 issue of *Close-Up*. In that article I discussed mainly basic image processing issues. In this and future articles, I'm going to cover a few things in more detail.

Sometimes digital photography makes things too easy and we take less care when we are setting up the shot in the camera. So the old adage from the days of film, especially slide film, "get it right in the camera," applies more than ever today. A good example of this is image rotation or perspective correction. Do you always get the horizon level and the building lines vertical or horizontal?

Sure, it's easy to fix this later isn't it? But think about what you are doing. Any sort of image resizing is one of the most destructive things you can do to an image. The reason is very simple, every single pixel has to be interpolated in order to make the change. Although this process now uses complicated mathematical formulae it still results in "averaging" pixel values. Inevitably there is going to be a loss of resolution (sharp edges become fuzzy) and distortion. If you can't get it right in the camera, the best time to fix this is in the raw conversion where the pixels only get interpolated once (the demosaicing and the rotation take place at the same time).

When shooting buildings or other subjects with lines that are normally vertical and horizontal it is important to have the plane of the image sensor parallel to the plane of the face of the subject. If this is not the case and, for example, you are looking up at the subject, then the top will appear to be falling backwards and will be smaller than the bottom.

Apart from digital correction later, you can address this in the camera by changing your position (further away) and using a different lens (longer focal length). Of course, this may not always be possible. An alternative is to use a wider angle lens than you would normally use, keep the sensor correctly orientated, and then crop off the excess part of the image. The disadvantage of this is that you are effectively losing resolution. However, this is only an issue if you wish to enlarge the image beyond a reasonable size for the actual pixels than you use. Or, you could use a Tilt/Shift lens.

Your choice of lens focal length is also important as this determines the perspective in the image. You can take a photograph with a wide-angle lens from close up or with a longer focal length lens from further away and

in both cases "fill the frame." However, the relationship between near and far objects, as well as the depth of focus, will be different for the two images.

Does a zoom lens make you lazy? You can stand "there" and change the focal length of the lens to fill the frame. But did you think about the perspective? Traditionally (read 35 mm film) a "normal" focal length was considered to be 45 - 50 mm because this approximates our normal field of vision. Anything other than this on a full frame camera (30 - 35 mm on a DX body) changes the perspective from what you would normally perceive. This may be what you intended for the visual effect, or maybe what you get because you didn't think about it.

Is the lighting right? Of course, "right" depends on the message that you are trying to convey in your image. Changing the lighting, even in subtle ways, can significantly change the message of the image. At the extreme, a silhouette is quite different to a front/side-lit image. In a studio setting everything is under your control, both the lighting and your control of the subject.

However out there in the real world, shooting landscapes, wildlife, or even flowers, you do not have as much control. Do you take the time to plan your photography to take advantage of the best light at a particular location? If you don't, then you might be missing out on the best shots. Of course you may be restrained by other factors such as having to be at the next destination at the right time. Notwithstanding this, research before you head out can pay big dividends.

One really useful tool to help with this is called "The Photographer's Ephemeris" ([app.photoephemeris.com](http://app.photoephemeris.com), available for iPad/Phone, android devices and as a web app). This provides you with sunrise, sunset, moonrise and set times as well as the sun or moon position in the sky at any time of the day or night overlaid on aerial photography of the location. A companion to this is "The Photographer's Transit" ([phototransit.com](http://phototransit.com), unfortunately only available for iPads) which shows the field of view of a given camera/lens overlaid on topographic mapping. One of its features is it actually simulates the view through the lens (using Google Street View, where available).

Apart from deliberate camera movement for artistic effect, your camera needs to be as stable and vibration-free as possible. A sturdy tripod, a wireless or cable remote release, and turning vibration reduction (image stabilization) off when on the tripod are essential.

## Eastwood Photographic Society vs Victoria Camera Club

The highlight of our external competitions is our friendly competition with the Eastwood Photographic Society of Glasgow, Scotland. This was the 9<sup>th</sup> competition and these events have always been closely contested with high quality images featured by both clubs. This year each club submitted 15 images from their Novice/Intermediate members and 15 from their Advanced members.

VCC chose Gregg Eligh as the Canadian judge while Eastwood chose a new judge, photographer Neil MacGregor. Both judges commented that the standard in both sections was very high and the competition was a challenge and a joy to adjudicate. There was a great difference in the judges' comments and marks for some of the images, however the top images came to the fore.

Neil's joint top images in the non-advanced section were "The Swimmer" by Scott Campbell (EPS) and "Oculus Lacerta" by Jonathan Adams (VCC) with Gregg nominating "Natural Beauty" by Blair Ross (VCC). In the advanced section Neil's top image went to "On the Attack" by Linda Baker (VCC) while Gregg chose "The Brolly Strollers" by Scott Laird (VCC).

Other high scoring images included "Crested Caracara" by Mike Wooding (VCC), "Hoverfly on Flower" by Edward Beveridge (EPS), "Great Horned Owl" by Doug Cronk (VCC), "On Jokulsarlon Beach" by Ken Lindsay (EPS), "Sahara Dunes" by Mary Robertson (EPS), "Dunes in Death Valley" by Gordon Griffiths (VCC), and "Four Spotted Skimmer" by Hanna Cowpe (VCC).

Congratulations to Eastwood on another stellar competition! Also congratulations to the 30 VCC club members whose images eked out a narrow win in both novice and advanced sections!

## Lions Gate "Celebration of Nature"

We have participated in the Lion's Gate Camera Club's "Celebration of Nature" competition since its inauguration in 2011. The competition theme is nature and it is open to clubs from BC and the Yukon. Our submission featured images by: Linda-Ann Baker, Mike Wooding, Don Peterson, Suzanne Huot, Richard Webber, Hanna Cowpe, Doug McLean, and Caspar Davis. VCC's 186.5 points gave us 3<sup>rd</sup> place, with the North Shore Photographic Society and the Lion's Gate Camera Club finishing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> respectively.

See the [Competitions Gallery](#) on our website for details.

## March 2015 Competition Judges

We extend our sincere thanks to the judges for the March Intermediate and Advanced competitions: Glenn Bartley, Gavin Hardcastle, Mitch Stringer and Dan Jones. We would also like to thank our in-house Novice Judges this month Pam Irvine, Caspar Davis, Willie Waddell and Paul Ross. All images and judges' comments are available at: [victoriacameraclub.org/vcccompetitions](http://victoriacameraclub.org/vcccompetitions).

**Glenn Bartley:** Glenn is a world-renowned nature photographer from Victoria. He is especially well known for his images of rare and difficult-to-photograph birds from the neo-tropics and for his portfolio of hummingbird images. Glenn's images have been regularly featured in North American and International nature books and calendars including several by National Geographic. His self-published books include "Birds of Ecuador," "Birds of Vancouver Island" and "Birds of British Columbia" and guides on Post-processing, Flash and Tropical Nature Photography Techniques. [www.glennbartley.com](http://www.glennbartley.com).

**Gavin Hardcastle:** Gavin is a professional landscape photographer from Vancouver Island. He teaches photography workshops all over the world and writes extensively about his experiences on location. You can read his photo guides and tutorials at his photo adventure blog "Fototripper." His fine art prints can be purchased from [www.gavinhardcastle.com](http://www.gavinhardcastle.com).

**Mitch Stringer:** Mitch is a freelance photographer and photography instructor from Victoria. He has over 25 years of experience and is currently an instructor at Camosun College and was a primary instructor at the former Western Academy of Photography. Mitch is a primary organizer of the Photographers at Painter's weekends (at Painter's Lodge, Campbell River) that features world-class talent and top professionals in the photographic industry who come together to lead a weekend of photographic discussion, exploration and passion that is truly a unique experience. [www.mitchstringer.ca](http://www.mitchstringer.ca).

**Dan Jones:** Dan has been a member of the Camera Club of Ottawa for the last 17 years. He is a professional photographer who has sold his images through various stock agencies, calendar companies and fine art galleries. Dan has been a judge for several camera clubs including the Victoria Camera Club, as well as for other organizations such as the Canadian Geographic Society, the Beaux Art Gallery of Brampton, Ontario and the Ottawa Orchid Society. [www.flickr.com/photos/92957327@N02/with/12930275634](https://www.flickr.com/photos/92957327@N02/with/12930275634).



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*Advanced Monochrome Print - 3<sup>rd</sup>*  
 "Stevenson Waterfront" by Richard Webber

Judge's comments: A well-crafted image, sharp where it needs to be sharp and soft where it needs to be soft. Good verticals and good print values. Well done.



*Advanced Digital Open - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
 "The Photographers" by Caspar Davis

Judge's comments: Funny subject matter, good story, decent composition.



*Advanced Digital Creative - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
 "In the Bull Pen" by Leah Gray

Judge's comments: Strong, simple image that has a timeless feel to it. The animal's fixating stare, together with its impressive pair of horns and the artsy black and white background, make this image a wonderful piece of fine art.



*Advanced Digital Nature - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
 "Orcas, Hornby Island" by Don Peterson

Judge's comments: What a cool image! The orcas, the eagles, the oystercatchers flying by. There is so much to look at. I love it!





*Advanced Open Print - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
*"Salton Sea Cubes" by Neil Boyle*

Judge's comments: Well done, good exposure, very good printing, very good sharpness.



*Advanced Digital Theme - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
*"Grey-crowned Crane in Flight" by Suzanne Huot*

Judge's comments: Wonderful capture of this pin sharp Crane, with great detail in the feathers. Love the bird's positioning, the orientation of the wing feathers and the red colouring on the head. Lots of room around the bird and space to fly into.



*Advanced Nature Print - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Altamira Oriole" by Mike Wooding*

Judge's comments: Excellent pose and great perch choice for this bird. Very pleasing background as well. A classic bird portrait that is very well done.



*Intermediate Digital Creative - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Artifacts" by Blair Ross*

Judge's comments: I love the vibrant, primary colours, wonky lines and forms, and feeling of movement. A real wall-hanger.



*Intermediate Open Print - Honourable Mention*  
*"Rajasthan Morning" by Bobbie Carey*

Judge's comments: Very nice image with nice quiet muted pastel colors and tones. I enjoy the three-dimensional space presented with the foreground, the tree and in the foothills in the distance.



*Intermediate Nature Print*  
*"Morning Thaw" by Ian Crawford*

Judge's comments: A very pleasing scene.



*Intermediate Digital Open - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
*"Unbreakable" by Judy Bandsmer*

Judge's comments: A tidy composition with good technique.



*Intermediate Monochrome Print - 2<sup>nd</sup>*  
*"Into the Mist" by Normand Marcotte*

Judge's comments: Lovely image, captivating. Excellent sharpness, beautiful gradation of tone, nice symmetry. A nice quiet journey to the end of the dock.





*Intermediate Digital Nature - 3<sup>rd</sup>*

*“Unnamed Falls near Hofn” by Jonathan Adams*

Judge's comments: This is the stand out winner in this category by a mile. A stunning landscape! There is visual interest throughout the scene and the slow shutter speed is very nice.



*Novice Print*

*“Southern End of Lake Kluane” by Pearson Morey*

Judge's comments: A beautiful image. Well composed with rule of thirds. Focus and exposure are good.



*Intermediate Digital Theme - 1<sup>st</sup>*

*“Great Blue Heron” by John Clarke*

Judge's comments: Gorgeous action shot, pin sharp, perfectly lit, with high degree of difficulty. Love the complementary orange and blue colours.



*Novice Digital Nature - 1<sup>st</sup>*

*“Cougar” by Robb Lansdowne*

Judge's comments: The maker was in the right place at the right moment. The cougar is fully lit. Nice shot of the animal in natural environment.



*Novice Digital Open - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Preparation" by Christina Aitchison*

Judge's comments: Great capture of the surfer and his environment. The ripples in the sand are beautifully captured. Focus and exposure are good.



*Novice Digital Theme - 1<sup>st</sup>*  
*"Propeller Condensation Trail"*  
*by Mark Van Arragon*

Judge's comments: A great capture of an unusual phenomenon. A difficult shot, getting the propeller to stand out without under-exposing the rest of the photo. Focus is sharp.



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Often, many photographs that inspire me are made by equipment that I will never possess. The Hubble ultra-deep space images are profound pictures of the size of the universe and our microscopic part in the cosmos. The electron microscope image of a nematode caught in a fungus loop is a microscopic equivalent. What I can do is capture the beauty and complexity of the world as I find it and with the equipment I have in hand.

Over the years I have made film slide shows for educational purposes, enjoying access to University Libraries and BC Provincial archives that is no longer permitted. In my last career as a high school shop teacher I worked with students and used Microsoft Power Point and an early digital camera to make slide shows such as How to Change the Oil in an Automobile.

My first digital camera, a Kodak 6 mega-pixel camera no longer works well but it changed the way I process images and I still keep it around. I realized that I was no longer using a camera but was now working a computer with a lens. Images that would have taken 20-30 minutes to process in a darkroom with toxic chemicals can be done in Lightroom in 2-3 minutes and, as a bonus, the images can be in colour.

In 1972 I bought an Olympus SLR with a 50 mm screw mount lens and then replaced the body with a Pentax when the Olympus wore out. Almost all of my b&w film for the next 20 years was exposed through that lens.



*"Lock-out at 30 below"*

The best advice I ever got at that time was, "Get close to the subject, then get closer." I complemented that camera with an Olympus clam-shell compact that fit into my shirt pocket. Although it was not as quick to point and shoot as Ted Grant's Leica, I often would get an unusual photo by having a camera with me.

My main camera now is a Canon 7D with a Sigma 24-105 mm f4 lens. The Canon G15 is my back up pocket camera. I have several tripods, with remote cables, extension tubes, and an external flash as well as a quality scanner and printer. My favourite camera is the one I have in my hand.



*"Waiting for Spring"*

There was a five-year lapse in my photography when I felt that the world did not need another image. The photo tally is in the billions and I did not feel what I was doing could be unique. I owe my partner, Judy, so much for encouraging me to revive my interests, renew my passion and to update my equipment.

I believe the world can be made a better place, where people are cooperative almost all the time and greed is not rewarded, a world where we could live within sustainable parameters without exploitation of other countries and their environments. As often as I can I use photography to explore those ideas.

I owe a big "thank you" to the VCC, which I joined in January 2014, for sharing brilliant pictures, workshops, fellowship and knowledge. The competitions and the judge's critiques have been invaluable in helping me understand finer digital photography and its role in making interesting images.

I still love the magic in taking pictures that capture moods and moments with people and their lives, and am rewarded when those pictures find resonance in viewers' eyes.



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**Tony Bounsall** *"I enjoyed the course, especially the pace and breadth of topics covered."* –AB

Catch the iPhoneography bug, learn which apps to use, how to use them together, and marvel at the results.

### ■ iPhone/iPad Artography – Starts May 9

**Tony Bounsall** *"Excellent instruction. Obvious that Tony really knows a lot about photography and art."* –JW

Learn to create amazing pieces of fine art on your iPhone/iPad from your photographs. By combining certain apps (known as app stacking) and layering images with handmade textures, the possibilities are endless.

### ■ iPhone for Absolute Beginners – Starts May 23

**Joel Friesen** *"Enjoyed and appreciated the pace allowing questions to be answered fully. Highly recommend."* –DF

A course for the absolute beginner, starting with how to properly turn your device off and on, what the buttons do, how to change basic settings and time saving tips.

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This course will instruct you on how to take better nature photos whether in a local park or around the world. You will learn how to consider composition when photographing, become more aware of light and how to best use your camera to help bring out the maximum impact of the setting. You will go beyond snapshots to create more professional quality images in the field.

### ■ Floral Photography – May 29-31

Cultivate and improve your artistic vision using selective focus, unexpected angles and depth of field to create imaginative and inspired images. Topics will include: exploring the many facets of successful close-up and macro photography, tips on composition, and how shooting from different angles can create dynamic images. Learn to control close-ups, and navigate challenging lighting with ISO, aperture and shutter speed.

## WRITING COURSES:

### ■ And Return to Write About It: Travel Memoirs – May 30 Yvonne Blomer (Victoria's Poet Laureate)

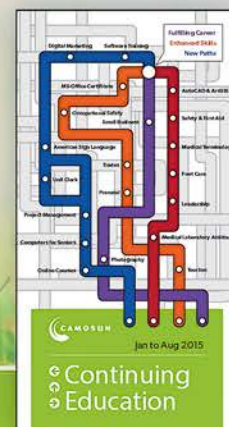
*"A gifted writer and instructor, always prepared, organized, and very generous with sharing her knowledge and love of her craft."*

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## Aperture Blades

by John Roberts

Aperture blades are a basic part of all of our lenses, so most of us do not even think about them. We know they are there, and that they are working for us, but we never think beyond that.

I think that you must be wondering what I am getting at here. Well, I am going to talk about why you may want to consider what the lens manufacturer has done with the aperture blades in the next lens you consider buying, because it can make all the difference in the world to how your final image looks.

Until recently, lenses only had up to 7 aperture blades\*, but some more recent designs have 9 aperture blades. You might think, why do I care if there are 9 versus 7? It is only 2 more blades and that is not going to make a huge difference. Well, it really does have a huge impact on the overall look of the image.

Let us start with a little basic Lens Aperture Theory 101. The more aperture blades that a lens contains, the rounder the aperture opening, the rounder the opening, the smoother the bokeh, (aka: the out-of-focus blur in the background), especially if there are specular highlights in the background, such as street lights, Christmas lights or sunlight reflecting off of water.

I first noticed this about 10 years ago, when Sigma brought out their new-at-the-time, 50 mm f1.4 lens. Keep in mind that I am not speaking of their new “ART” lenses here. That was the first time I had noticed that they had specified 9 blades in the lens. At about the same time, Nikon bought out a new AF-S 50 mm f1.4G lens, which also had 9 blades. I did a head to head comparison between these two lenses and added in my Nikon AF 50 mm f1.4D which only has 7 blades. I can say for certain, that there was a distinct difference between the lenses with 7 and 9 blades. Lenses with 9 blades give a distinctive smoother blur to the out-of-focus areas, compared to the lens with only 7 blades. For anyone interested in those side-by-side samples, email me.

For a portrait or macro shooter, the more aperture blades the better, for the most part, the smoother transition you have to the items in your background the more your subject pops from the background.

A landscape photographer, on the other hand, may not be overly concerned due to the fact that they stop down

to f22 most of the time, and out-of-focus is not really a look they are going for.

Now, there are other lenses that are specifically designed to give you a not-so-clean out-of-focus blur, and more of a unique swirly or choppy out-of-focus area. Most notably would be the Petzval designed lenses, which many photographers to this day love for their look, myself included. I love lenses by LensBaby, where the out-of-focus blur is so bad, that it is, in my opinion, awesome.

Lenses with that unique look to them, will give your images character, or a look, and if you are always using that look, it becomes your signature to your images.

Here is a portrait that I took with an older Leica M-mount lens, the Voigtlander 50 mm f1.1 Nokton. This only has 7 blades, but as you can see, that out-of-focus area is far from smooth, in fact, some might even say it is “busy,” but I like that look for my portrait work. In the end it is totally personal preference for what you want your photography to look like.

*\* There are lenses with more aperture blades. Some older Leica rangefinder lenses have as many as 13 blades, and as I mentioned, the rounder the aperture opening, the smoother the out-of-focus blur. This is one of the reasons why Leica lenses have been noted to be some of the best lenses ever made, and why they also command the price that they do. That, and when you buy a lens/camera from them, it has a card in the box that says “This item was lovingly hand assembled by: ....” They have taken their time to make sure that their lenses will give you the best image possible.*



by Neil Boyle

CAPA, the Canadian Association of Photographic Art, publishes "Canadian Camera" magazine. They have asked our club to write an article on West Coast Landscapes and we are starting off with a request for images that fit this rather broad description. For Club photographers who aren't quite ready to head off to shoot, here is some information.

### The How of Landscapes.

For a start, there is an article on the basics of Landscape Photography on page 29 of the [May-June 2012 Close-Up](#) (Volume 65, number 5; on the club website.)



*Trial Island, Victoria, BC*

There are some essentials for landscape photography. The simplest gear includes a camera body that shoots RAW (which allows much more effective post-processing), a wide-angle lens and a solid tripod, augmented usually with longer lenses, filters (polarizing, neutral density, graduated neutral density) and a level.

Lenses must be meticulously cleaned to minimize flare from dust when shooting anywhere near the sun. Choosing the focal length of the lens is important as it determines how much of the middle and back ground will be in the image, how close the photographer needs to be to the foreground elements, how close it will focus, and it has an impact on depth of field.

The tripod is invaluable. While it plays a major role in ensuring sharpness, its primary function is to hold the camera still allowing the photographer to assess the composition and make the sequential small changes in composition that move the image towards perfection.

Camera position matters. The horizon needs to be properly levelled and the degree of distortion when a

wide angle lens is tilted up or down needs to be assessed. Shooting with the camera low or high changes the impact of foreground elements in the image.

The scene is found, the walk-up shot has been assessed and found wanting, exploring the area has found the perfect place from which to shoot. The background is obvious, the middle ground has been placed in the image with camera movement to the right or left, up and down, and the essential foreground element(s) selected. Now for the lengthy composition. The horizon is usually placed on the lower (to emphasize the sky) or upper third (rule of thirds) but some situations may require it to be placed near the top or bottom. Placing it in the middle produces a static image, usually frowned upon, but this may fit the photographer's idea. Positive and negative space and the placement of the separation between them have an impact on the feel of the image. One of the most important parts of the composition is the thoughtful position of the carefully chosen foreground elements.

Once the composition is properly laid out, it is time to search the scene for unwanted elements: the branch coming out of a head, things poking in from the side of the image, bright spots, unexpected detritus that can be removed (litter, sticks and grass that produce unwanted lines, etc.), are so much easier to remove now, before the photograph is taken. Finally, the depth of field is set by the choice of f-stop. Traditionally landscape photography uses a small aperture for maximum depth of field, but the image may justify an exception. The histogram is used to determine proper exposure, with attention to avoid blowing out any one colour channel.

Shoot lots of images, from many angles. Experimenting with different depths of field, slower shutter speeds and small movements of the camera produce a number of images from which to choose the best.



*Ogden Point Sunset, Victoria, BC*





*Long Beach, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve*

Some other things to consider. Sharpness matters, a solid tripod (and if using a tripod, turn off image stabilization), protection from the wind, remote release, and mirror lockup. When to shoot, the golden hour (around sunrise or sunset), in the blue light after sunset, at night, in the clear air at dawn. Generally try to avoid the bright sun of midday. Focusing on the foreground elements, a third of the distance into the image, the hyper-focal distance, are guidelines that can work, but the choice is dictated by the effect desired. Manual focus may be needed. Special cases may require a tilt-shift lens, HDR, long-exposure, black and white or motion blur. Remember it takes time to scout and set up.

Light is a most important element. Someone famous once said, "The scene makes the picture, the light makes the photographer."

### **The What of Landscapes**

Landscape photography is hard to define, but my favourite definition is "portraits of the world." It often shows the large, but includes everything down to tiny landscapes found in electron micrographs; it often shows nature but doesn't exclude urban environments; it does not exclude the "hand of mankind" as nature categories do.

All good landscapes have a background, usually large, often awe-inspiring, hopefully emotion-evoking. It can be sky, cloud, water, trees, mountains, and so on. Its purpose is to set out the environment of the image. A favourite is skies, big skies with dramatic clouds, often stormy clouds, or the lit-from-beneath clouds of the perfect sunset/sunrise. Our west coast often supplies big, powerful seas/waves for the back or middle ground. The middle-ground brings the image to the viewer and gives a place for the essential foreground elements. Most photographers are drawn initially to the

background, but spend most of their time placing the foreground elements in their images.

For the Canadian Camera article, the landscape images need to evoke the emotions of the west coast. Obviously these would include water, waves, tidal pools, beaches, sunsets/sunrises, boats, and on-shore objects, but don't forget mountains, animals, things made by people, unique environments such as Garry Oak meadows, and a host of other possibilities that will leave the viewer wondering why they haven't yet moved to the west coast.

### **The Where**

It's not hard to find places to make west coast landscapes. Our city, our harbour, the Juan de Fuca Strait, the Gulf Islands, make up our back yard. The road through Metchosin to Sooke, Jordan River and Port Renfrew, with stops at every beach along the way, provides a cornucopia of opportunities. The west coast of the island, from the easily accessible Tofino/Ucluelet areas to all the small ports and inlets are full of west coast imagery. The east coast of the island, as far north as Port McNeil, Port Hardy and Cape Scott are within a day's drive, and for those with boats, the opportunities are limitless. One could even, in a pinch, go to Vancouver. Ah, but then up the Sunshine Coast.

### **The Emotion**

Many things make a good image: the story it tells, the memories it evokes, the feeling it leaves inside you, the urge it generates to visit the scene. A landscape image can be technically perfect, but without emotional feel, without pop, or pizzazz, or buzz, it's just a good picture. A technically imperfect image with emotion is a far better image and will last much longer in the viewer's memory, and it just might get published in Canadian Camera.



*South Beach, Pacific Rim National Park Reserve*

## Crab Spider

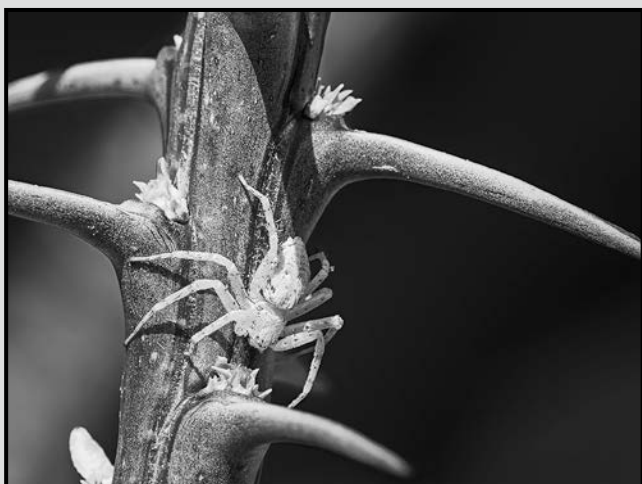
*By Neil Boyle*

There are a lot of crab spiders in our world, and they are small and inconspicuous. This one was hanging from my door frame in Socorro, New Mexico. I “rescued” her, taking her by her silk strand to a nearby Ocotillo branch, carefully placing her where I liked the background and could use my tripod and macro lens to capture a good image. My goal was to get a macro image of a spider in a setting that would satisfy the requirements for a nature competition image (no hand of man, etc.).

Difficulties to work around: bright sunlight, thorns on the Ocotillo, a messy background (aperture choice and positioning to get an attractive bokeh), spider mobility. Fortunately, she froze in this position, and allowed me to get the macro lens close enough to fill the frame with her and enough Ocotillo to show the environment. Using a remote release to minimize camera movement, moving the camera slightly after each shot, trying for the best composition, I shot 22 images.

Processing the RAW file in Lightroom: I cropped and rotated it slightly for aesthetic appearance; adjusted the white balance, exposure, and white & black points. Added a little clarity, saturation and vibrance. B&W conversion was done in Google/Nik Silver Effects Pro 2, to give the spider the ethereal look, darken the sky, and set the appropriate contrast and structure. Then back to Lightroom to fix any spots, final adjustment of exposure and white & black points.

Technical: Nikon D800e body, Nikon 105 mm macro lens, solid tripod, remote release. ISO 200 (base setting), f27 (for maximum DOF), 1/45<sup>th</sup> second.



## Tumacacori Mission

*by Del Lucas*

I have an interest in history and photographing old buildings, so last winter, while we were in Arizona, we drove to the Tumacacori Mission. Established in 1691, it is one of the oldest missions in Southern Arizona. Additional buildings were built in the 1750's, and all are open to the public.



The mission was founded by Jesuit padre Eusebio Kino but was abandoned by 1848 and fell into severe disrepair. Restoration and stabilization efforts began in 1908 when the site was declared the Tumacacori National Monument by President Theodore Roosevelt. A great deal of work was done in repairing the interior of the mission, and some areas are roped off to keep tourists from damaging original artifacts. I was more interested in the external structures and did most of my photography around the outside walls and courtyard fence.

This image was taken in the courtyard near the graveyard at the rear of the mission and shows the prayer room (the round building) and the main mission building. The theme for the February club competition was weathered, and I received first place for this image in the Intermediate Theme category.

I used a Canon 6D camera and with a Canon 24 - 105 mm f4 image stabilized lens. The photo was taken in the shade at mid day on a bright, sunny day. I used a 35 mm focal length, f9 aperture, ISO 100 and 1/200<sup>th</sup> second shutter speed. As I shoot everything in RAW, I processed the photo in Lightroom 5 and was able to capture the weathered appearance of the buildings and also some of the cracks. I lowered the exposure and increased the saturation to make the different textures of the plaster and concrete on the walls more obvious.



## Tuesday Shoots

*by Wayne Swanson*

### May 12: Perspective

Before you rush down to St. Ann's Academy to capture the converging lines of the trees and driveway leading to the building, remember perspective refers to the relationship between the background and the foreground.

You can alter the perspective with the camera angle or the choice of lens. Getting a low angle with a small object such as a flower in the foreground can make your background subject look majestic. Using a wide angle lens to shoot a room will make the back wall seem farther away and the room appear to be larger. A long lens to shoot a mountainous horizon will make the background appear larger.

### May 26: That Looks Like?

Remember as a kid lying on your back looking at the clouds to see what things you could see, perhaps one cloud resembled a plane or a bear. At Halloween, the silhouettes of leafless trees imitate monsters. Stimulate your imagination. What shapes do you see in the things around you? Be creative. It may only be a knothole in a tree, but it may also remind you of a face.

### June 9: Retro Time

Fads and fashions repeat. What is old becomes the latest craze. Current eyeglasses may make you look like Buddy Holly or Spencer Tracy. Designers may create new walls that contain old bricks to make them look part of another era. In the search for retro objects, consider using your camera's special effects filters to enhance the sense of a bygone age. Lunch will be at Paul's Motor Inn because of its retro decor.

### June 23: Friendly Shoot Out

Time for a role reversal? You will be bringing the topics for this one. Come armed with three slips of paper with a topic written on each. These slips will be put in a hat and you will draw three topics from the pool to shoot. There is no advance preparation but you can interpret the topics that you draw in any way that you wish. You just have to think on your feet as you scour the city for your selected subjects. So, you need to be innovative in your approach and try for a humorous twist in your photographic interpretation.

## Weekend Shoots

*by Richard James*

We have two out-of-town field trips scheduled for May and June this year.

### May 16-18: Olympic Peninsular

The Olympic Peninsula offers a great diversity of photographic opportunities, from the wild West Coast, rainforests to alpine meadows and the much drier areas around Sequim and Dungeness with their sheltered seashores.

As in previous years, our visit will include opportunities to shoot shorebirds, Bald Eagles (we know of a nest location at eye level!) in the Dungeness and Sequim areas. Another shorebird location is Salt Creek west of Port Angeles which also has resident River Otters. With a very early spring experienced on the West Coast this year, the wildflowers at Hurricane Ridge will be blooming earlier than usual and we should have a good range of subjects to shoot.

Heading towards the West Coast, we will likely target La Push and Rialto Beach as well as the rainforests along the way, or along the Hoh River.

### June 19-23 and 25-29: Palouse

This will be our first Club trip to the Palouse, an area south of Spokane, WA, that is well known to landscape photographers for its rolling terrain and crop patterns. Not only that, there are still a number of locations with vintage farm buildings and agricultural equipment. Tucked away in various corners amongst the farmland are also natural areas where wildlife can be found. The trip is based in Colfax, WA, and will be led by Jack Lien, a well known local photographer and workshop presenter.

Unusually for landscape photography, it is often best to use a long lens, especially when shooting from locations like Steptoe Butte. To best show the terrain and crop patterns, much of our photography will be near dawn and dusk, which in June is a challenge! But being dedicated photographers, we will be up early, out late and take a siesta at lunchtime.

Please check the club calendar for additional details of these and other trips. As of the end of April there is still room on the Olympic Peninsula trip and there may be room on the Palouse trip

by John Coenraads

Electric motors make the world go round. From the motor in your refrigerator, to the fan that cools your PC, a typical home will harbour as many as forty motors. And photography is no exception; taking an image may involve as many as a half-dozen small motors. Some of these are no more sophisticated than the motors in your child's radio-controlled car while others use a unique technology involving ultrasonic vibrations. Those of us who started their photographic careers using film cameras will recall that cameras used to be powered by "thumb drive." The energy for cocking the shutter and operating the mirror was stored in spring motors that were tensioned each time the film was advanced. Aperture and focus also depended on manual control. Although these cameras contained a "button" battery, its role was simply to operate the light meter.

Today's DSLR contains a compact but powerful rechargeable battery that powers the motors that makes totally automatic shooting possible as well as continuous shooting (burst mode). But what has not changed is the basic mechanics of the "mirror box" that lies at the heart of every SLR camera. When a picture is taken, the mirror flips up, the shutter blades open and close, and the mirror drops back down. In burst mode, this cycle is repeated as many as eight, or more, times per second. If what lies underneath the black shroud of your camera's body is a mystery, you may enjoy a visit to this website that shows a DSLR being dissected.

[www.imaging-resource.com/news/2012/04/10/d7000-dissection-what-lurks-beneath-the-skin-of-a-modern-dslr](http://www.imaging-resource.com/news/2012/04/10/d7000-dissection-what-lurks-beneath-the-skin-of-a-modern-dslr)

Once the more than 100 screws have been removed, that hold together the circuit boards and external housing, the mirror box is the sturdy unit that remains which holds the pentaprism, shutter, mirror and autofocus sensor. I like to think of it as a sort of roll cage for all the critical optical elements whose alignment must be maintained despite any dings or bruises the outer housing may endure. Note how the camera lenses mate directly with the mount that forms the front part of the mirror box.

### The Camera Motors

If you visited the previous website and took a close look at the mirror box, you will spot two motors: the little grey cylinders that each have a red and black wire coming out of them. The one in the upper right powers the mirror and the one in the lower left, the shutter. Figure 1 also clearly illustrates the complexity of the

mirror box. Any child who has wrapped a wire around an iron nail, connected it to a battery and used it to pick up paper clips, understands the basic principle of electromagnetic attraction that makes this type of motor work. Imagine the nail/coil (armature) mounted on an axle that allows it to rotate, then with some clever switching, the electromagnet can be made to spin round and round.



*Figure 1: Nikon D750 mirror box. One of the DC motors is clearly visible on the upper left. Image: courtesy Professor Bob Newman.*

But some camera manufacturers, e.g. Canon, reduce the weight of the armature by omitting the iron core (nail). These so-called coreless motors have very low inertia and can therefore accelerate to speed and come to a stop very rapidly, which is critical in enabling the shutter and mirror to do their "flutter dance" when the camera is operating in burst mode.

### Lens Motors

Two motors are usually found in a camera lens: one drives the aperture ring, the other the focusing ring.

In fact, the external aperture ring is now often missing altogether, the reason being two-fold. Small electromagnetic motors spin at very high speed and gears are needed to slow them down. But this would mean that the aperture could not be adjusted by turning the aperture ring unless some type of clutch were provided to disconnect the ring from the gear train. Also, the camera's computer needs to keep track of how far the



aperture is opened at all times which it can more easily do if the aperture is operated strictly “by wire.”

The focusing motor must operate quickly and silently, and accurately drive the focusing elements to the desired position. Pioneered by Canon, many cameras now use a version of the ultrasonic motor to drive the focusing ring. “Ultrasonic” may sound like advertising hype but it isn’t; these motors in fact employ mechanical vibrations at frequencies that extend beyond human hearing. Although fast and quiet, they are also more expensive but worth it in this critical application.

The motor has two parts, the (stationary) stator ring fits snugly against an adjacent ring (the rotor) connected directly to the focusing ring. Unlike electromagnetic motors, which are difficult to package neatly inside a lens, this type of motor fits comfortably around the lens elements making for a very elegant installation. The stator has many slotted teeth and is lined with a circle of piezoelectric crystals.

If you have lighted your barbecue by pushing the button that makes a sharp clicking sound, you have made use of piezoelectricity. The sound is the result of a small “hammer” hitting a special crystal that emits a pulse of high voltage electricity when struck. The resulting spark lights the gas. But piezoelectric crystals also work in reverse. When fed high voltage pulses, they vibrate.

By pulsing the crystals surrounding the stator with the appropriate frequency, the stator ring can be made to resonate. This is what happens when you stroke the edge of a wine glass with a wet finger to make it sing. The resonance normally takes the form of a “standing wave.” But this wave can be made to travel by pulsing the crystals in the appropriate sequence and it is this travelling wave which, by friction, drags the rotor with it. However, the friction fit is such that it does not prevent the photographer from adjusting focus at will.

I now insist that you visit the following website which I find quite astounding (OK, it blew my mind). [www.pierretoscani.com/echo\\_shortpres.html](http://www.pierretoscani.com/echo_shortpres.html). Not only does it feature beautifully-rendered diagrams illustrating all aspects of DSLR operation, many can be animated. I direct you especially to the last three images which, when animated, illustrate clearly how an ultrasonic motor works in ways that words cannot. Also, don’t neglect to click on the short high speed video (just after figure 16) that shows the shutter and mirror performing their intricate dance.



*Figure 2: An ultrasonic motor: notice how the ring on top pushes a spring against the stator (with the teeth) so that it makes good friction contact with the rotor that sits underneath.*

So, it’s interesting that a few years ago, Canon introduced its new line of STM lenses that make use of an older technology, the stepper motor, for focusing. Stepper motors are ubiquitous in printers and scanners where motors must turn by precise amounts when pulsed under digital control. Normally noisy and requiring a lot of current, Canon has apparently perfected the stepper motor to make it a viable, less expensive, alternative to the ultrasonic motor.

### Two more motors

At the outset, I mentioned that as many as six motors can be involved in taking a picture. Most of you can probably guess number five: the motor that operates the image stabilization. Although not a motor that spins or rotates, electromagnetic coils (either inside the lens or the camera body) do move to stabilize the image and therefore constitute motors by my definition (it converts electrical energy to mechanical motion).

Number six may reside inside your flash. For example, some Nikon and Canon external flash units use a small motor to move the flash bulb so that the light is focused to match the focal length of whatever lens happens to be mounted on the camera. I’ll bet you didn’t think of this one.

It has been more than fifty years since SLR cameras became the preferred design for high-end cameras. I find it surprising that in 2015 a viable all-electronic substitute has still not appeared to replace the SLR design in all of its over-engineered electro-mechanical glory.

## May Flowers

by *Nancy MacNab*

Last month in this column I wrote about photographing April showers, so it seems only appropriate that this month we should discuss May flowers. Although with this being a very early spring in Victoria, we have had flowers blooming since February.

Flowers as a subject give you a wide range of possibilities and techniques. Do you want wildflowers or garden flowers? Photograph a vase of flowers or a plant? Are you looking for a specific colour or combination of colours? The leaves can also make interesting subjects, displaying a variety of shapes, colours and textures.

You can use a variety of lenses when photographing flowers or gardens, from wide angle to telephoto to macro. While a dedicated macro lens is nice to have if you are going to use it frequently, it is not an essential when starting out. The close-up setting on your zoom lens will give you a feel for the results you can get. Close-up filters or extension tubes are a less expensive way to get started in macro photography.

Get close to your flower with a wide angle lens to show the flower's setting in the garden. Wide angles also let you show more of the garden in one photo, but be aware that it emphasizes the distance between things, so bare patches can appear even larger. Whatever is closest to the lens will also appear much bigger than anything that is much further away. This can result in a somewhat distorted perspective; so you can use it to your advantage.

Sometimes you are better off standing back from your flower and using a telephoto lens. This type of lens has a much narrower field of view, so it can cut out some of the clutter surrounding the flower. Because of its ability to "get close," it allows you to pick out that perfect specimen at the back of the border, rather than having to settle for the one at the front that is somewhat past its prime.

Usually you will want a sharp image, or at least to have a selected part of the flower in sharp focus. This makes a tripod essential if you also want to use the lowest ISO setting for greater image quality with less noise. Tripods also allow you to take time to gently adjust your focal point or other settings, experiment with different settings for the same composition, or try slightly different compositions for the same subject.

When setting up your composition, keep an eye on the edges and corners, as well as the background. Gardens are inherently messy, with bits of stems and leaves trying to sneak into your photo where you don't want them. Avoid the glaring sun on the metal roof, or that brilliant red, out-of-focus flower off to one side in the background. Save yourself time on the computer by setting up your photo carefully before you click the shutter, then check it on the LCD screen!

To avoid harsh, distracting shadows, some photographers prefer gently overcast days to bright sunny ones. Days with no wind make it easier to capture sharp images, although flowers dancing in the wind can be great shots for motion blur. A piece of tin foil, white paper or cardboard can be used as a reflector, bouncing some light back into the shadows to reduce the contrast.

Flowers make great subjects for experimenting with your depth of field. For this exercise, you want a flower with others fairly close behind it, so you can see how their sharpness changes with each change in aperture.

Set up your tripod and camera with the aperture wide open (the f2.8 to f5.6 end of the lens), focusing on the stamens in the centre of the flower. Adjust your shutter speed to give a correct exposure. Without changing your point of focus, take photos at f8, f16, and f22 or f32, each time adjusting your shutter speed to give the correct exposure (i.e. if you increased the exposure by ½ stop for the first photo, keep on doing that). When you get home, compare the images on the computer. You focused on the stamens of the flower. How much of the rest of the flower is in focus for each image? How much of the background is in focus? For that particular flower, which interpretation do you like the best.

If you are bored with your own garden, or just want to try photographing some different flowers, here are some local gardens that are open to the public (some are free while others are not). Along with the well-known Butchart Gardens, you can try Abkhazi Garden (Fairfield), Finnerty Gardens (University of Victoria), the gardens at Hatley Castle (Royal Roads University), the Horticultural Centre of the Pacific on Quale Road in Saanich, or the gardens along the Gorge Walkway and Gorge Park, including the Japanese Garden there. Maybe you'll see other Club members there too.

So, get out and enjoy experimenting with flower images.





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