



Nature Photo Times

Member: Photographic Society of America & Twin Cities Area Council of Camera Clubs

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Ann “Weatherguide” Conrad S-O-Y Judge

Ann Conrad, Vice President of the Freshwater Society and Executive Editor of the Weatherguide Environment Calendar is our “Slide of the Year” judge this year.

For over thirty years, the Freshwater Society has been the nation’s leading public nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving, restoring, and protecting freshwater resources and their surrounding watersheds. Through its program initiatives in freshwater resource management, groundwater and surface water stewardship activities, public education, conferences and publications, the Freshwater Society has been a catalyst for understanding one of our most important natural resources.

The Freshwater Society is dedicated to promoting the protection and rational management of all freshwater resources.

To accomplish this task, The Freshwater Society—

—Recognizes the vital role of freshwater to all living things and the impending crisis in quantity and quality of accessible freshwater.

—Dedicates its experience and resources to activities that lead to the understanding, protection, enhancement, and restoration of freshwater resources.

—Invites the participation and support of individuals, associations, business and industry, institutions, educators, and government in these activities.

Production of the Minnesota Weatherguide Wall Calendar entered it’s 25th year with the calendars for 2002 – calendars which contain the work of several MNPC members. It is available in wall calendar and engagement calendar editions. Make one

your own and treat yourself to some fine Minnesota photography. Perhaps you’ll also be inspired to submit some of your photos for a future calendar. The calendar is also used as an educational resource in many classrooms. The Weatherguide Teacher’s Resource Guide is being revised, and will be distributed to educators throughout the region.

Freshwater is a scarce and vital resource that is in increasing demand. Contamination,

pollution, and over-use are a few of the many challenges that continue to threaten freshwater resources. The Freshwater Society works to foster active stewardship among all citizens, conduct public education and awareness of freshwater issues, and promote sound public policies that protect freshwater.

The public is invited to join in this vital work. Members of the Society receive *Facets of Freshwater* - a quarterly membership

newsletter covering a wide variety of topics related to freshwater and a 20% discount on the 2002 *Minnesota Weatherguide Environment Calendar*. Reading a recent issue I was struck by the impact fresh water and the lack of it has on the subjects of our nature photography – not to mention our own well being.

FOR SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

call the Freshwater Society toll-free at 1-888-471-9773 or fax 952-471-7685, or e-mail freshwater@freshwater.org, or write to
2500 Shadywood Road,
Excelsior, MN 55331.
Visit www.freshwater.org



Arbor Lights Photo Opportunity and Contest

This year the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum extends its invitation to photographers who have often found beauty and inspiration through the lens of their camera at the Arboretum, to join us for a new event – Arbor Lights, now in its second year. Last year regional photographers found that the winter landscape lit with low landscape lighting created new possibilities for their winter photography. This inspired one local photographer who calls the Arboretum her “hobby” to convince us that a photo contest is the next step to making our gardens a destination for winter photography.

Arbor Lights opened Thursday, November 15 and runs through January 12 – from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m., Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays only. Bring your entire family and friends and while they’re enjoying a walk through the gardens, children’s crafts, music and education programs, you’ll be free to enjoy your own passion – photographing nature. As an added enticement, Thursdays are free! Pick up your photo entry at the reception desk in the Snyder Building lobby or download information on the Arboretum web-site at www.arboretum.umn.edu. Guidelines are simple and winners will be awarded prizes as well as being included in next November-December’s showing in the Arboretum gallery.

Come join us this year for Arbor Lights and take advantage of one of America’s most unique outdoor lighting shows. Patterned after one of England’s most revered garden programs, Arbor Lights features the natural beauty of the gardens in winter, rather than presenting a commercialized winter experience. You’ll find that the programming as well lends itself to the understated simplicity of the Arboretum – providing a place for solace, reflection and enjoyment for all people. We hope you’ll join us this year – Thursdays – Saturdays, November 15 – January 12.

Cordially,
Janell Marmon Stevens
Special Events Coordinator

Nature Close to Home

The early December sun washed across the landscape and lightly kissed the tall frosted canary grass – and they melted away, revealing the damp golden seedheads. A jagged streak of gray and black momentarily hovered above the grass, then settled onto the seedhead – looking for breakfast no doubt, or was the bird, like any of us in our younger days, simply enjoying the thrill as the grass swayed and bent to the ground under its weight. “Chick–adee–dee” – the notes penetrated the cool morning air as the bird took flight and darted away as quickly as it had come. Dozens of tiny diamonds streaked in an arc as the rebounding seedhead rejoined the patch of canary grass.

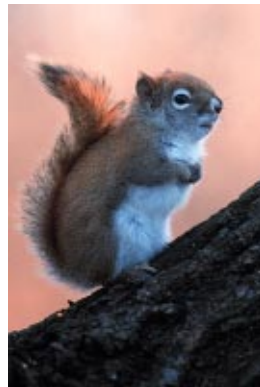
Feeling good about the warmth of this December day, a red-bellied woodpecker



hammers out his tattoo on an old weathered snag. A brilliant red sweeps from the base of the bill over the crown and across the nape ending at the mantle tells me that this is a male bird.

The female is nowhere to be seen at the moment; she often comes in a bit later. Working his way up the trunk, he finds the first of many one-inch diameter holes packed with suet and seed. A long laughing call is an ap-

parent call for his mate – then he digs in. Suet is a great cold weather substitute for the summer fare of insects and their larvae. It’s ideal for maintaining the high body temperature, which ranges from 100 to 112 degrees Fahrenheit.



Bits of acorn shell sprinkle to the ground much

like the frozen rain of last week. Gray Squirrel sits on an Oak branch turning the acorn with his front feet, sharp incisors chipping away the shell. The bitter fruit is a mandatory food for the squirrel. He seems relaxed but keeps a sharp eye toward the sky, where most danger comes from. Far overhead, a red-tailed hawk flies slow lazy circles. He is no threat to Gray Squirrel. Without warning, a streak of cinnamon brown erupts from the trunk of the oak, chattering as it hits Gray Squirrel in the rump. The acorn is history as Red Squirrel pursues his victim through the tree-tops, up, down and around the trunk and with wild aerial leaps from tree to tree until Red Squirrel, assured of his victory, breaks off the chase and watches Gray dash for safe haven. Don’t know why these guys have such dislike for each other. I’ve watched this



scenario hundreds of times and Red always comes away the winner. It’s like watching a pick-up truck and a sports car running an obstacle course.

In the distance a white-tailed deer, alerted by the treetop antics, lifts its head from feeding on acorns and stands rigidly alert. Ears at attention, the right front foot is slowly raised and then quickly and resoundingly

stomped on the forest floor. No response from his surroundings. Dark eyes glisten as the statuesque buck nervously moves his head back and forth trying to detect any movement, any danger. Nothing alarming, but being a buck, with hopefully a long life ahead, he snorts once and bounds off in the opposite direction, waving his white flag at me.

It’s not uncommon to see this much activity and even more in an hour or so – if you are in the right place at the right time. The right place – some pristine wilderness no doubt. Not quite. I had spent the morning at my favorite nature center. Which one?

It doesn’t matter. Get to know one near you and it could quickly become your favorite. Volunteer your services – they all need good photography. Get to know the staff. You will be amazed at how much flora and fauna exists so close to you. You’ll be doing the nature center a great service, and you’ll discover your own real worth by doing something you really love – and sharing it. More importantly, you will be influencing the lives of young people who will soon be taking care of our environment our world and us.



Go forth, do it and enjoy. The rewards are all yours.

Best wishes for the Holiday Season and may the New Year be even more exciting and rewarding for you.

(Photos on these pages are by the authors.)

November Awards

Judges: John Pennoyer and Mariann Cyr
10’s

Gladitsch, Marilyn – Mushroom on Moss
Klein, Dave – Green Heron, Corkscrew
Swamp

Nystrom, Pauline – Intense Red Fox
9’s

Hobbs, Rick – Sandhill Cranes
Jenkins, John – Cries & Whispers
Klein, Dave – Female Tree Swallow
Looking for Mate

8’s

Cleveland, Ron – Peregrine Falcon #2
Duncan, Rose – Minerva Terrace
Gladitsch, Marilyn – Bottle Gentian
Hahn, Jeff – Mating Longhorn Beetles
Hobbs, Kathy – A Drink in the River
Hobbs, Kathy – Exploring the Fall Forest
Karai, Vijay – Indian Paintbrush
Karai, Vijay – Yellow Slope
La Mere, John D. – Albino Whitetail
Deer

McDonough, Jean – Caribou in Denali
Neavin, Terry – King of the Hill
Neavin, Terry – Purple Hydrangea
Nelson, Vern – Female Downy Wood-
pecker on Birch Tree
Nelson, Vern – Giant Swallowtail
Samuelson, Tom – Michigan Lily
Wraalstad, Duane – Egret

The Magic of Light

If I am ever asked, “when is the best time to photograph,” my standard answer is “whenever I can get out of the house!” While this is kind of a true statement, I always try to get out of the house early in the morning or arrive at a location late in the day. On many occasions I will leave at 3:00-4:00 AM just to drive to northern Minnesota to photograph in the early morning light. Sometimes I will stay until sunset to catch the early evening light and will not get home until quite late.

To be a great photographer it is certainly important that all of us understand the basics of photography. We must be extremely intimate with our camera system. All of those “rules” must be second

nature to us; i.e., the rule of composition, the rule of exposure, and any other rule that is tossed our way. All of these elements are necessary to capture a photo.

Why is it that some photographers can take an average subject and make an exceptional photograph? It is probably because those photographers understand how various lighting situations will react on that subject. If you want to photograph the Maroon Bells in Colorado you had better arrive early. The early morning sun will slowly highlight

the peaks and work its way down. Later in the day the harsh sun will put the peaks in a dark shadow.

The majority of my photography is done during the first couple of hours in the morning and the last couple of hours in the late afternoon. With the sun at this low angle the



Saquaro National Park Sunset

sun’s rays have a longer path to travel to your subject. As it travels at this low angle dust/dirt particles and yes, even pollution will act as a filter. All of this will make the light “warm” which generally has a soft yellow or orange hue to it. As the sun gets higher in the sky the rays have a more direct path to your subject and will make it harder to show detail. I certainly am not saying not to photograph in the middle of the day. But just be aware of how your subject will react to direct sunlight. Photographers must ask them-

selves what the best light is to photograph this subject. It may mean coming back the next morning or coming back later that afternoon.

Don’t fall into the “trap” that everything must be front lit. In other words always having the sun behind the photographer. For some photographers this is the only way they will photograph a subject. I personally feel that they are losing out on some great creativity. Why not try some side lighting? This works excellent on some subjects like hilly type terrain where shadows show great detail.

With birds and animals side lighting can help define feather/fur detail and even add a little mystery to your subject. Some subjects just beckon to be backlit. This is great for silhouettes, rim lighting on animal’s fur, and translucent feathers such as when a bird spreads its wings.

Yes, we all need to understand the basics of photography. We can learn that in the classroom or even in an instruction book. However the only way to really learn how “light” can benefit the serious photograph is to go out in the field and Experiment! Experiment! Experiment!

Good Shooting

Photo Gifts (Under \$10)

Dale Bohlke

Christmas is a time to get those items on your wish list. While some gadgets are very expensive, equally functional equipment is available on the most meager budget. The following are listed in no particular order.

1. Clothes pin and string – place string around clutter and attach to clothes pin which can be attached to anything that will hold clutter out of the field of view
2. Large Zip Lock bags – can be used for almost anything from rain protection to carrying film, probably a dozen other uses as well
3. Locker Mirror – the perfect tool to get light under mushroom caps
4. Ear bulb – There is an improved version specifically for photography at National Camera Exchange (HAKUBA Super Blower)
5. Gray Card – When the light is hard to judge use this for a correct exposure of the subject.
6. Minnesota Volunteer Magazine – features great Minnesota photography, free for the asking, a donation is appreciated however
7. Minnesota State Road Map – very helpful in finding that hidden SNA or hotspot you heard about at photo club.
8. A box of your favorite cereal – eat the cereal, use the side of the box for a reflector base
9. Aluminum foil – pull out an appropriate length, ball it up and then smooth out and wrap around a side of your cereal box for a good reflector.
10. Microweave cloth – Blow the grit off with #4, breath on the lens and wipe to clean your lens.

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www.minnesotanature.org

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Meeting on the third Wednesdays, Sept-May
at the Visitor Center of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, 3815 East 80th Street, Bloomington, MN



December 19 Meeting

Holiday Party – Bring goodies to share.

Slide of the Year Program

With Ann Conrad

Tell a Story

Dale Bohlke

Tell your story with style! Photographers witness and record natural beauty few people see. A good photograph draws the viewer into this “secret” world. How can this be done? My answer is with style! Our personal view of the subject is shown via the medium of film. Look at the work of Franz Lanting, particularly his book Eye to Eye. Compare this with any of Art Wolfe’s work. Two completely different styles, each is highly effective. Closer to home Jim Brandenburg has a style that creates a mystical feeling. His website (jimbrandenburg.com) is an inspiration.

Develop your style by asking yourself which photographer’s style you would like to emulate. What photographic techniques are being used and how can I transfer those techniques to my photography? Most of these techniques require a limited amount of equipment. Style is about imagination, creativity, and stretching the mind.

Winter Splendor: A Photographic Retreat

February 1-3, 2002 – U of M Compleat Scholar Weekend
612-625-7777, www.cce.umn.edu/scholars

Spend your day photographing crisp, frosty winter scenes; spend your evening before the fireplace developing your outdoor photographer skills with John Gregor, Randy Hagar and Mark Lissick of Coldsnap Photography. Wilder Forest Retreat Center offers the backdrop for this workshop – a sanctuary of 1100 acres of trees, lakes and meadows near Marine on St. Croix, Minnesota. All experience levels are welcome. Deadline for registration is January 2, 2002.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

MINNESOTA BOTANY

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHY



Enter the Minnesota Botany! It’s the one competition where your fine plant photography does not have to compete with the furry or feathered. Sixteen medals in various designated and open categories will be awarded. This exhibition is limited to Botany (slides only), which includes flowering plants, non-flowering plants (fungi, lichens, mosses, ferns, Gymnosperms, etc.), habitats and fossil plantlife. An entry form was included with your November *Nature Photo Times* and may also be downloaded from our web site at www.minnesotanature.org. Co-chairs of the event are Mariann Cyr and Jim Duncan.

The closing date is January 28, 2002 so there is plenty of time to enter. Judging will begin at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, February 2 in the auditorium of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge visitor center – the same place we hold our monthly meetings.

New members especially are encouraged to attend the judging. You can come for all or just a part of the judging. Eight to ten workers are needed for a variety of jobs such as recording scores, calling out scores displayed by the scoring machine, projectionist and focusing. Contact Ron Cleveland, judging chairman if you can help for even part of the morning. The Minnesota Botany is sponsored by MNPC and is approved and listed by the the Photographic Society of America.