



Slides of the Year 2001

Judged by Ann Conrad, The Freshwater Society/WeatherGuide Calendars



Mariann Cyr

BOTANY

Honorable Mentions

- Marilyn Gladitsch – Emerging Bloodroot
- Jim Duncan – Goatsbeard
- Mary Kay Bertas – Transparent Tulip
- Mary Kay Bertas – Peony
- Ron Cleveland – Turk's Cap Lily
- Terry Neavin – Purple Hydrangea

Runner-Up

- Tom Samuelson – Lily of the Valley

Slide of the Year

- Mariann Cyr – Saxifrage & Moss - Iceland Flora

GENERAL

Honorable Mentions

- Terry Neavin – In the Queen's Garden – Bryce Canyon
- Jerry Harlow – Maple Trees on Lotus Lake
- Mary Kay Bertas – Antelope Canyon

Runner-Up

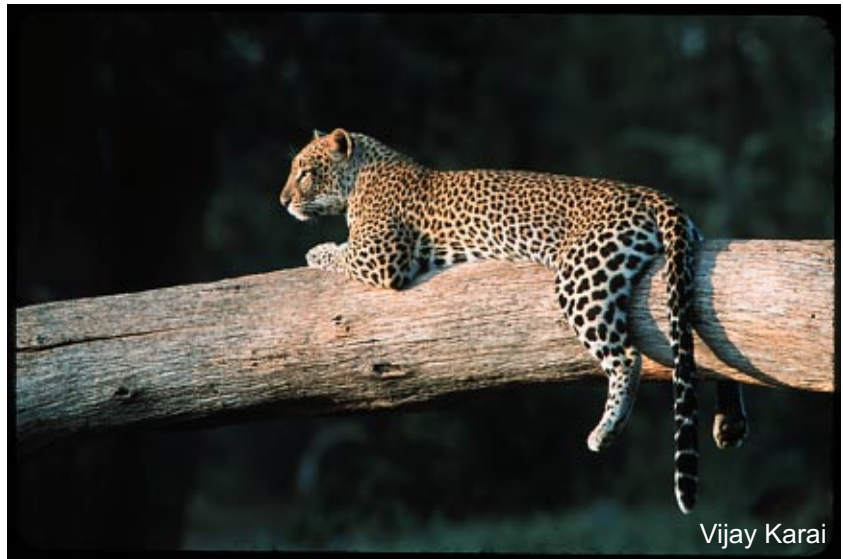
- Ron Cleveland – Ice at Low Tide, Prince William Sound

Slide of the Year

- Cynthia Fleury – Castle Mountain



Cynthia Fleury



Vijay Karai

ZOOLOGY

Honorable Mentions

- Vijay Karai – Big Tusker
- Terry Neavin – Red Fox in Rain #7
- Terry Neavin – King of the Hill
- Jean McDonough – Caribou in Denali
- Ron Cleveland – Peregrine Falcon #2
- Kathy Hobbs – A Mouthful
- Terry Neavin – Learning to Share – Wolf Pups
- Jean McDonough – Three Bears

- Vijay Karai – Bison Herd
- John Jenkins – I Love You Mom
- Vijay Karai – Dwarf Mongoose Babies
- Morrie Holm – Resting
- Jim Duncan – Pelican #3

Runner-Up

- Dave Klein – Red-Shouldered Hawks Mating

Slide of the Year

- Vijay Karai – Leopard on Tree



Camouflage

Ron Winch

Your heart races a little faster and your palms begin to sweat. Your best slide of the evening is on the screen. You agonize through the seconds of silence – waiting for the score. “Seven”, the judge calls out, and then goes on to elaborate. “Good exposure, nice composition, good subject placement, but the subject doesn’t stand out from the background. Next.”

“That should have been a nine – maybe a ten”, you say to yourself. Perhaps the subject didn’t stand out from the background, but how many centuries has it taken to evolve this camouflage? The body form lends itself to the environment, the coloration fits superbly and the spots help break up the body outline and give depth to the animal – making it a natural part of the environment. What more could you ask for?

The idea of camouflage is not new to nature. It has been evolving since the beginning of time and is likely responsible for the survival of many species. The military picked up on this as evident in battlefield clothing and equipment. Hunters take great advantage of camo clothing for concealment. Even urban planners consider it in more subtle ways when siting a building into the environment.

If we look up the word camouflage in the dictionary, we find it defined as concealment by disguise. This disguise may be of such a nature as to actually simulate the immediate background or merely break up the outline or reduce the solid shape of the object camouflaged.

Most wild creatures live in constant danger from their enemies or are themselves ever on the alert for prospective prey. It is not surprising to find animals of all sorts

exhibiting countless types, degrees and variations of concealing adaptations. One of the fundamental factors in the lives of wild creatures is the constant struggle between species, generally referred to as the struggle for existence.

The immediate surroundings in which animals are found are quite variable as to vegetation, amount of light, color and type of earth, and consequently, the patterns needed for effective concealment are equally diverse. Common to animals in all these backgrounds, regardless of their color pattern, is to become relatively invisible by losing its appearance of being a solid object. Light falling on an animal generally comes from above; consequently the back is in stronger light while the sides and underbelly receive much less light. Color patterns have evolved with darker tops and lighter undersides to make an animal appear less solid.

Countershading is a basic principle of animal coloration and is of wide occurrence in nature. Many and quite unrelated groups of animals – mammals, birds, reptiles and fishes in all parts of the world show it. Add to this color resemblance, the general similarity in appearance between some animals and their surroundings, and the effects of camouflage are greatly increased. Examples here might be polar bear, snowshoe hare, arctic fox and shorebirds in general. This accounts for so many green birds, tree snakes, tree frogs and arboreal insects in the forested parts of the world, while on the forest floor we find large numbers of brownish critters. The salt and pepper mottling of shorebirds is a given on shorelines and coastal areas.



Even with better than average color resemblance and some countershading, an animal is often recognized by its easily identifiable contours. For effective concealment, it is essential that the telltale appearance of form be destroyed. Here a combination of color and pattern tends to break up the visible outline of the animal.

Camouflage in nature is widespread in all parts of the world and within all groups of animals. It may be brought about by coloration alone, by form alone or by any combination of color and morphological characters.

Considering the above information, look back at your score of “seven”. You made the photo; you decided it was a keeper; you did the research to learn everything possible about the capture and you decided it was worthy of entry. You should be the expert on your photo. You probably entered the slide to get another opinion or was it just in hopes of getting a high score? The judge viewed the slide for only ten seconds and was asked to score and comment on it – based on his or her background and experience. Consider that in judges we find photographer/naturalist or naturalist/photographer and rarely someone who is equally versed in both. Learn from another viewpoint.

Let us – all of us – be aware of the talent we have, being able to “see” and capture vignettes of the natural world and the even greater joy of sharing with and educating others.

My Winter Friend

John Pennoyer

Walking through three plus feet of snow is certainly no easy task, but having snowshoes certainly makes it a whole lot easier. This January day had a beautiful, blue sky with no wind. Of course being in Northern Minnesota this also means below zero temperatures. I was in the Sax-Zim bog area hiking a trail in search of Northern Hawk Owls. Using my binoculars from the road I had spotted an owl perched on top of a spruce tree. So with snowshoes and photo pack, I started down the trail hoping to capture this elusive owl on film. As I stopped and watched this little owl with my binoculars, I could see he was struggling to find a meal. He would fly to a high perch and scan the countryside and after a few minutes he would go to another perch and repeat the process. I decided not to pursue this particular owl so as not to disturb his hunting. So I continued down the trail.

It is always amazing how quiet the north woods can be when you travel a short distance from the hustle, bustle of civilization. Standing there totally absorbed in my solitude, I heard the telltale sound of chickadee-dee-dee, chickadee-dee-dee and there he was, perched on a branch just a few feet in front of me. Then I noticed another and another, for a total of five or six. All were singing a beautiful chorus to each other as they were searching for some tidbits to fill their little tummies on this cold January day. The Black-capped Chickadee is one of my favorite birds. This little bird can survive the harshest of Minnesota winters. They are very



adept at finding food in our severe winters. Many other species, such as finches, sparrows etc. will follow these little birds and rely on them to find food. Although we will see Chickadees in small groups, they are by nature loners. Waiting patiently on a branch they come to our feeders when no other birds are present, quickly steal a sunflower seed and take it up to a branch. Using their beaks like little jack-hammers they break open the shell to get at the heart of the seed. They will repeat this process over and over again, and, as quick as they come to your feeder they are gone.

This group of Chickadees was all perched in the same tree. With their feathers all fluffed up to stay warm they looked very well fed. Even during cold winter

nights these little birds are anti-social. Instead of sharing a cozy spot with each other, they will chase away any other would-be roommates. As I stood there and enjoyed the companionship of these little birds, one flew away, than another and as quick as they came they were gone.

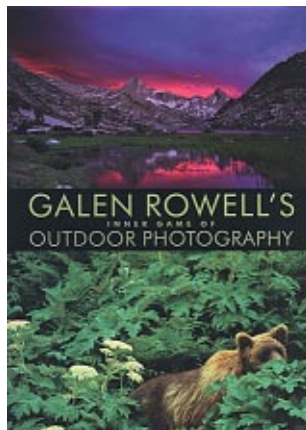
As I turned around and started to snowshoe back to my vehicle, in the distance I heard chickadee-dee-dee, chickadee-dee-dee. I am hoping that they were in chorus to celebrate some new found food supply.

On this particular snowshoe hike I never did photograph the elusive owl, but it didn't really matter. I was able to spend some time with my winter friends.

Good Shooting

Galen Rowell's *Inner Game of Outdoor Photography*

The grand master of adventure photography reveals the art, craft, and philosophy behind his images. In sixty-six essays based on his popular column in *Outdoor Photographer*, and in more than one hundred and sixty color photographs, Galen Rowell shows how he transforms what he sees into vivid, memorable works of art. He clearly explains why "pre-visualizing" a photograph before exposing any film is one key to making an arresting image rather than a mere replica of what we see through the viewfinder. Along the way he also offers advice on practical and technical matters such as how to pack camera gear; what to leave behind when you've got to travel light; pushing film to extremes; and when and how to use fill flash, smart flash, and remote



Nature Photo Times

"Fine photography blends aspects of both science and art to produce an image first crafted by the human mind."

smart flash. This is a how-to book by an artist who has made adventure and photography a way of life. It is both an inspired manual to taking better photographs and an inspiring journey of discovery into the creative process. 160 color photographs.

Galen Rowell, internationally renowned photographer and mountaineer, is the author of such acclaimed books as *My Tibet* (with His Holiness the Dalai Lama) and *Mountains of the Middle Kingdom*. His work regularly appears in *Life*, *National Geographic*, *Outside*, and *Sports Illustrated*.

—Review from Amazon.Com where this \$40 book sells for \$28. —Ed.

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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

FIRST CLASS MAIL

January 16 Program

Accepted Slides from the 2001 North Star
International Circuit of Nature Photography

Tell a Story

Dale Bohlke

January is a time for reflection and planning. Most of the time it is too cold to enjoy outdoor photography. On these cold days and long nights I am considering these questions. What is my goal in photography? Is my photography an attempt to imitate or innovate? Is my photography an attempt to create or conform? Am I trying to control or connect with nature?

How am I going to improve? Each year I choose one theme. In 1999 it was "Think Light", 2000 was "For the Birds", 2001's theme was "Color". My theme in 2002 will be "A Strong Center of Interest". This is placed on a card where I am constantly reminded of the goal of the year.

What is your goal and how will you improve your photographic stories this year?

Rick Hobbs Wildlife Workshop

The next Wildlife Workshop is scheduled for February 7, 8, 9. The cost is \$950 for 10 photo sessions in the field over the three days. Please contact Rick for details at 651-994-4778 or rick@rickhobbs.com. This is an opportunity to photograph animals such as fox, wolf and coyote in a controlled outdoor setting.

MINNESOTA BOTANY

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHY

January 28 – Deadline for entries.

February 2 – Judging begins at 9:00 A.M. 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 763-425-6009, 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.



Porcupine Slide Mis-taken

Please check the slides you picked up at the December meeting. Is one of them Janet Cardle's "Porcupine"? If so, please bring it to the January meeting and give it to Mariann Cyr. Thanks.