

Founded 1956



# Nature Photo Times

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

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## Photography Spoken Here

by Lawrence C. Duke

It has never ceased to amaze me when I hear someone say..." I've been there and there's nothing there..." If there was nothing there, are you sure that you were in the right spot? Or, maybe you didn't go far enough to find that right spot.

I've been to locations, that, without having a desk clerk or bellman to talk to and ask questions of, I would have walked past the right spot.

A manager in a grocery store in a small village in Austria, showed me his sled dog race shots, taken with his brand new, full price, Nikon F-100, and he also told me about the next race. My wife

and I got up early the next day and skied to the next village.

We arrived just in time to see the first race teams take off steaming down the course. The temperature was -25 C and everybody was drinking hot Schnapps. The drivers were steaming, the dogs were steaming, and the hot Schnapps was steaming. After an hour both cameras quit in the cold, but I had three rolls of Sled Dog racing in Austria.

Because of the cameras, and talking to another photographer, we learned that we could take a bus back to our

village. Other than the Schnapps, the bus was the second warmest spot we had all morning and it was just a great day.

Isn't that what photographers want when they go out to a new location. You're looking for a little guidance. You might want some recommendations. And, you're looking for a great experience.



## CANON Equipment for Sale

1N\Booster - \$750, IIE Kit - \$300, 300/f2.8 - \$2700.00, 100-400IS - \$1300\*, Speedlite 550EX - \$225\*, 1.4X II EF Ext. - \$250\*, 2.0x EF Ext. - \$150, LowePro PhotoTrekker AW - \$115, Epson Stylus 2000P - \$625\*, Bogen 3221W/StudioBall w/four plates - \$300

Most of the equipment is in excellent shape. Items with an asterisk were purchased in June, 2001 and only used about thirty days in a shortened shooting season in Alaska this past summer. The others were purchased in 1998. I will donate 10% of the proceeds to the club for ongoing projects (maximum of \$500).

I am trying to put together funds to help develop a fundraising program to benefit three different charities: the Ronald McDonald House, the Minnesota Evans Scholarship House fund and the Pillsbury Kindergarten program.

I will be purchasing all new equipment in June before I head off to Alaska for another summer of shooting.

Call me at work, 651.225.0621, or my Sprint number, 612.207.8304.

Kevin Chapman

211 Christenson Way NE  
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E-Mail: [JTreeCorp@aol.com](mailto:JTreeCorp@aol.com)

Website in development at  
[www.MILE21.COM](http://www.MILE21.COM)

## Beginner Outdoor Photography Class

On Sunday, May 19, from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm, Sandhill Outdoor Skills Center and professional photographer, Doug Alft, will teach outdoor photography techniques, depth of field and other basic aspects of being successful in capturing that perfect picture - especially for 35mm camera buffs. BYO lunch,

## Advanced Outdoor Photography

Sandhill and Doug Alft, are offering an *Advanced Outdoor Photography* class on September 28-29. This two-day course will feature outdoor photography from blinds during the autumn migration. Additional topics covered include settings, light, aspect, and other elements for capturing that perfect shot on film - including answers to your questions. Learn more about digital imagery and image archiving, too!

Bring your own camera, camera manual, camera accessories, and sleeping bag. We will supply lodging, blinds, and 2 meals and refreshments as part of your \$30 registration fee. Registration is limited to 20 people on a first-come, first-served basis and is con-

camera, camera manual, camera accessories, and 5 rolls of film. We'll go outside rain or shine, so be sure to bring rain gear for yourself and your camera equipment. Registration is limited to the first 20 people who mail in their \$10.00 per person registration fee by May 9.

firmed by receipt of your \$30.00 per person fee by September 14.

Checks should be made out to DNR-Skills Center. Include the name of each participant, and the address and daytime phone number of one person in each party and send the registration fee to:

**Sandhill Outdoor Skills Center**  
**Box 156, Babcock, WI 54413**  
**(715) 884-2437**

Inquiries on the status of registrations may be sent via e-mail to: [greens@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:greens@dnr.state.wi.us).

Visit the Sandhill Outdoor Skills Center website at: [www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/reclands/sandhill](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/wildlife/reclands/sandhill) for information on other activities.

# Timberdoodle's Skydance

Ron Winch

Peent, Peent. Peent. The low, raspy nasal sound drifts over the cool damp abandoned pasture. And then silence, so quiet you can almost hear the stars twinkle. The blue-magenta eastern horizon is giving way to the advances of darkness. Overhead the first evening stars are twinkling down on the scene. Although the sun has dipped below the western horizon nineteen minutes ago, there is still enough light to discern colors.

Peent. Peent. The sound seems closer now, but it just carries better in the cool damp air. Scanning the clearing with 7x50 binoculars, I locate the source. It comes from one of the

most ridiculous looking birds imaginable. Large protruding eyes are set farther back on its head than any other bird. Thus placed, they can watch for danger as the bird probes the soft ground for earthworms. The dancer

will go through the aerial display over and over until darkness engulfs the site, only to begin again in the feeble light of dawn. Moonlit nights, however, encourage him to display throughout the night.



Timberdoodle, bog sucker, American woodcock - by whatever name you know this bird, he is still only a name to most people. Days are spent in willow or alder thickets where most folks never venture. His only public display is in the waning hours of dusk and twilight -

seemingly demands a romantic light of less than .1 foot-candle. The stage must be an open amphitheater in woods or brush, even a pasture will do. Center stage must be a mossy area, a streak of clean sand or very short grass to accommodate the bird's short legs. He flies in low from a neighboring thicket, lands on the clean stage and begins the overture: a series of nasal peents spaced about two seconds apart, sounding much like the call of a nighthawk.

again in places unfamiliar to most people. The nest and bird are so well camouflaged that, in photographing the nesting bird at a distance of ten feet, it was difficult to relocate the bird once you looked away. The female is so confident of her protective coloration that she allows you to stroke her - with no apparent fear or distress. The young are precocial and if threatened they play dead with all the skill of a "beany baby". Parents have been reported carrying chicks clasped between their legs while in flight. "Never heard of such a thing", you say, which only reiterates how little we sometimes know of our natural world.

Peent. Peent. The silence is broken again, only to be followed by the whirl of broad, strongly cupped wings. The timberdoodle skims over the ground, picking up speed and begins a spiraling ascent to over 300 feet. The 7x50 binoculars are well suited to low light viewing, as their exit shaft of light is 7.15mm matching the maximum opening of the human eye. But now, even the seven power glass is not enough to discern the bird in failing light.

Where can you see the sky dance of the timberdoodle? Almost any area described earlier might host a number of woodcock - but be aware of private property. The Traveler's Guide to Wildlife in Minnesota highlights Springbrook Nature Center as an excellent site.

It is only when the twittering stops and a musical call replaces it that we know the bird has reached the height of ecstasy and is returning to earth. The song now is a series of liquid chirps as he drops like a falling leaf in a series of sideslips, upsweeps and zig-zags his way back to the peenting grounds - many times to the exact spot where the performance began, and resumes peenting.

I hope you have the opportunity to witness and enjoy the timberdoodle's skydance.

If this does not attract a female, he

## Join the Discussion!

We had the first meeting of the slide discussion group at the March meeting and I thought things went great! Give us a plug and remind people that it meets simultaneously with the salon and to bring a couple of slides if they are interested in partaking.

-Mike Prokosch

### March Salon

Judges:

Rose Duncan & Joe Kandiko

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Terry Neavin - Milkweed Pod in Bloom

Kathy Hobbs - Young Tiger Among Blades of Grass

John D. La Mere - Sandhill Crane

Jean McDonough - Cheetah Yawning

Tom Samuelson - Drake Mallard

Florence Scholljegerdes - Cougar by the River

Ted Galambos - Wolf Creek Falls

Pauline Nystrom - Cathedral Rocks

Jean McDonough - Polar Bear in Churchill

Mariann Cyr - Lupine Close-Up

Tom Samuelson - Fiddleheads

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Kathy Hobbs - Watchful Cougar Mom

Cynthia Fleury - Winter Sunrise North Shore

Kevin Chapman - Katmai Bear

John D. Jenkins - Redtailed Hawk

Rick Hobbs - Pelican landing

Dave Ellenbecker - British Soldier

Kevin Chapman - Alaskan Grebe

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Cathy Jones - Great White Heron Drinking

Marilyn Gladitsch - Amanita Trio

Vern Nelson - Goatweed Basking on Rock

# Exposure 1

John Pennoyer

For white subjects open up 1 1/2 to 2 stops; for black subjects stop down at least 1 stop. However, if the lighter subject is surrounded by a darker background be sure to stop down. If a lighter background surrounds the darker subject a photographer must open up. If a neutral subject is surrounded by a #@\$%^&\*!@#\$\$%^. It just seems to go on and on with no end in sight.

I personally think one of the most difficult items in nature photography to understand and teach for that matter is "exposure". Everybody has their own way of teaching and/or understanding of exposure and if your photos are coming out the way that you want them to, I would assume that you understand this phenomena that we photographers call exposure. Before I go too far my definition of correct exposure is defined by one word— "detail".

Simply put, if your white is white with "detail" and black is black with "detail" and every thing else has correct color tone with "detail" then you have achieved the correct exposure.

I thought I would take these last two newsletter articles and talk about this

## Wanted: Editor

### Nature Photo Times

Current editor Ron Cleveland will retire in May after seven years as editor of the club newsletter. Do you have a computer and internet connection but have never done a newsletter? Ron can help you get started. Call 763-425-6009 or e-mail rcland@minn.net to find out what is involved in producing *Nature Photo Times*.

## Tell a Story

-Dale Bohlke

Hug a Tree, smell the roses, get to know your subject. Once you have identified the subject spend some time getting to know it. Really look at it. How does it connect with its surroundings, with you? When you have identified the single feature that attracted your attention, put the camera on its tripod and use the mechanics of photography to tell your story.



<b>stops</b>	<b>2-1/2</b>	<b>• 2</b>	<b>• 1</b>	<b>• 0</b>	<b>• 1</b>	<b>• 2</b>	<b>• 2-1/2</b>
<b>white</b>	<b>98%</b>			<b>18%</b>			<b>3% black</b>

subject from "my" perspective. Due to the fact that most of us shoot slides these articles will be based on that. Negative film has a lot more latitude than slide film.

Before we talk about exposure we must first discuss metering for exposure.

There are two ways that we can discuss metering: 1) REFLECTIVE: that is the light reflecting from the subject to your camera. This is how the majority of camera meters operate, and 2) INCIDENT: that is the light hitting the subject. These articles discuss using your camera's reflective light meter. In my opinion, the newer cameras reflective light meters are extremely accurate and at this point in time it is the only metering source that I use.

Some of the reasons that I only use this metering system are that with the continually changing light conditions will automatically change your meter. It is also the fastest metering system because you never have to take your eye away from the viewfinder. And, filters that I have on the camera will also be in the metering calculations. However Incident light meters are gaining popularity with nature photographers. (Notice that I did say "at this point in time".)

Slide film has about a five-stop latitude from white to black. All camera meters want to expose for a neutral tone which is generally called 18% gray. (Green, blue, etc. can also be neutral.) If you look at my chart above 18% will be referred to as EV=0. A white sub-

ject such as a snowy egret can reflect up to about 98% of the light. However a black subject such as black bear will really absorb the light and reflect maybe as little as 3% of the light back to the camera. So if we shoot all subjects at a metered value of 0, you can see by the chart that our beautiful white egret will be a dirty gray and that shiny black coat of the black bear will be a light dull black or a dark gray. As photographers we need to be able to change our exposure values to properly expose our subjects. Luckily for us many of our subjects will many times be within 1/2 stop of neutral.

I could end this article by simply saying that to properly expose a white subject a photographer must open up (allow more light to enter film) and to properly expose a black subject a photographer must stop down (allow less light in). This is a true statement but this is where the confusion comes in. How much do I open up or stop down? Well, this depends on how much light you are working with, what camera metering system you are working with, what film you are using, and what tone the foreground/background is. Well, you will just have to wait for a month because these will be topics for Exposure 2.

As many of you may be shooting some Loons this summer here is a photo tip: Overexposed white is always worse than underexposed black. The trumpeter swan accompanying this article was shot at EV -2/3. Why did I use that exposure value? Ask me about it!

Good Shooting

# Nature Photo Times

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## Minnesota Nature Photography Club

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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

April 17 Program  
**Digital Photography & Nature**  
Carlyn Iverson  
(Rescheduled from March)

The club elects officers in May. Please contact Joe Kandiko - or any officer - if you are willing to serve.

## The Ditch

-Tom Samuelson

Each spring my enjoyment begins and it lasts all summer. The life-giving forces of spring bring everything to life. The joy of seeing the lavender colored Wild Geranium in the road ditch, a block from home, confirms that summer is close at hand.

Wild Geranium grows throughout most of Minnesota's

southeast region and prefers open woods and savannas. Every May the ditch abounds with these beauties and enlightens my commute to and from work. While driving by, my car finds itself slowing down just enough to provide a glimpse of what the ditch has to offer. Is there something new, a silent question is asked?



At first, the ditch wasn't even noticed. It was just another ditch. Who pays attention to ordinary ditches? Who thought this gem was so close to home? From Wild Geranium to the less dramatic



but interesting Horse-tails, to Heliopsis and others throughout the year, the ditch had caught my attention. One day, the ditch was offering another of its sur-

prises. A scant few Michigan Lilies were in bloom. But, time only allowed for one photographic outing and that yielded a single usable image. The next day the lilies were gone. Someone had picked them. Will they come back again? I believe so, but the lingering question is was I the only one enjoying this, I hope not?

The enduring message is that all of us need to take advantage of our opportunities to photograph when the beauty is there. Don't let them vanish over night. Having plans and being prepared helps. I have my plans for the coming summer; the question is do you?

Be ready and keep shooting.



Range of wild geranium in Minnesota