



Nature Photo Times

Founded 1956

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

Vol. 51, No. 1 - May 2007

The View from Here By Lawrence C. Duke "Photography Spoken Here"

As an art buyer from the past, and a working Photographer, as an independent (Help stamp out "freelance" it's a bad term.), and then the State, for more than forty years. I too, have an opinion.

So, I think, the more we look at photography and art the better we can understand what is happening in the field. It has been moving so very fast these days that it is truly hard to keep up with all the new trends and techniques.

And so, the rant begins:

"What is with this scoring thing?" I've not seen so many good images get such poor scores in a very long time. Or are we hiding behind the rules that have been laid down for these many years? Is the judge's ego (the superficial conscious part of the psyche) getting in the way?

Now work with me; looking around in the great out-of-doors, you the photographer see something of interest. You set up the tripod (it's always with you, right?). You mount the camera with lens on the tripod. Now you take a closer look and start getting involved with the subject. You start making decisions: how close, how far, what do I want to include, what should I leave out, what does the light look like, do I have to add something, is my center of interest where I want it, do I have good depth, how's my composition, and all the other questions that go into this decision to make an image.

And, if the last question you ask is, "... I wonder what the judges will think?" you'll be missing the best part of your photography.

In the late 60's I worked with a New York photographer whose day rate was my monthly wage. When I asked why he was shooting an item a certain way? He said "that's the way I saw it, that's the way I shot it." Made sense to me.

"Everyone looks at the world from a different point of view."

Field Notes By John Pennoyer "Finding Your Subjects"

One of our favorite places to take a short vacation is the Itasca State Park area. The end of June and the first part of July is an ideal time to rent a pontoon and look for Loons on Lake Itasca and look for native orchids in and around that area. In 1997 my wife and I decided to take the first week of July and vacation at Bert's Cabins in Itasca St. Park. We had been there for several days and as usual were having breakfast at a local restaurant in Lake George. One of the locals was also there every morning and was asking us if we were catching any fish? I replied that I wasn't a fisherman but a photographer looking for wild flowers, especially orchids. He quickly informed me that there are several plants of the Minnesota State Flower just a little ways down the road. Now this is prime time for Showy Lady's slipper but as he was explaining the orchid I knew that he was talking about Pink Lady's slipper which would not be in bloom at this time. After breakfast we drove to the area and I explored the pine forest and found a couple old dried up plants of the Pink Lady's slipper. I cataloged this information in the back of my mind as a future place to explore.

This year I got a permit to go into Pennington Bog in Northern MN. After several hours in the bog I was walking back to my car and noticed another car parked right next to mine. Luckily I had placed my permit on the dashboard (thinking that the vehicle might be someone from the state checking up on me). As I approached my vehicle a gal came out of the bog and introduced herself and as it turned out she was hired as an independent botanist to explore and record plants in this area. It seems the state was going to widen the road and needed to do an environmental impact study before the road project could begin. After a few minutes of talking about orchids and other botanical subjects she told me about a place just a short distance away where there were several Ram's Head Orchids in peak bloom. Again I cataloged this area for future reference.

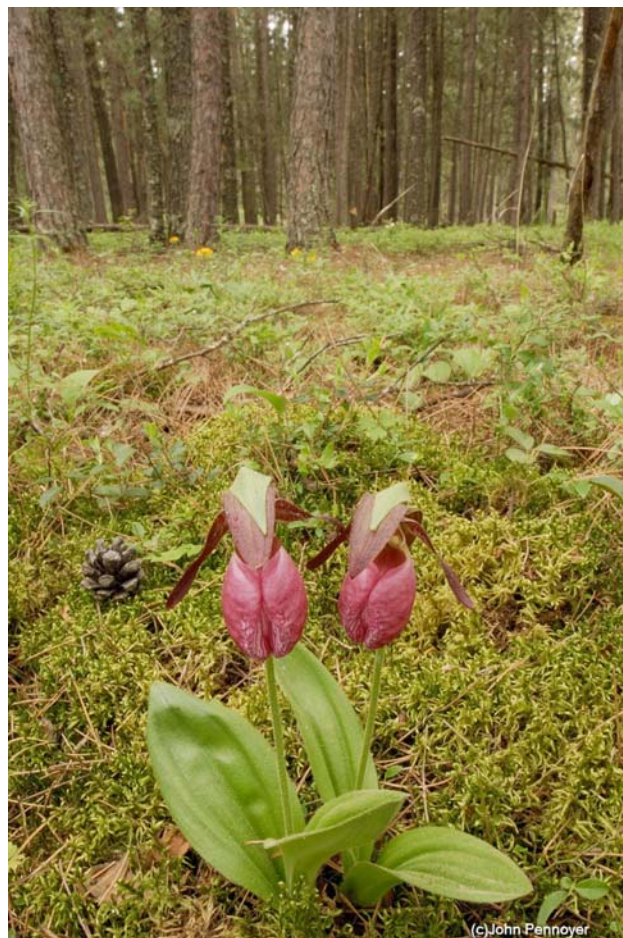
Several years ago I was at one of the parks and hiking the trails just looking for any subject to photograph and I came upon about 3-4 plants of Showy Orchis. I took a couple of photographs but they were just past peak. This year I went back and decided to look for those orchids. As I was buying

my state park sticker I mentioned to the gentleman that several years ago I had found Showy Orchis in this park and he immediately informed me that if I wanted this flower to go to a certain location where they are a lot more numerous.

One of the most frequent questions that people have asked me is “How do you find your subjects?” That is always a very difficult question to answer because there are many resources available to all of us. The easiest way most people want is for someone to tell them exactly where to go. Yes, just like the examples above, someone mentioned to me locations of certain species. That does not mean I immediately went there. Those Pink Lady’s Slippers? I went there this year, 8-9 years after being told of those “State Flowers”. I found numerous plants with most of them being single and took only one photo of a pair of slippers in a habitat environment. That is one of the photos that accompany this article. I probably would not go back because I have better places to photograph that particular species. One of the best resources is the SNA book that is available at most State Park visitor centers. I have used mine so much that it is now in pieces. Whenever I am in a particular area if there is an SNA close I almost always go to investigate and just keep my eyes open looking for plants in bloom as well as those that are past peak, even possibly last year’s dead plant. Also remember that many plants will not always be mentioned in plants known to be at this site. I honestly believe that this is done on purpose. I know of orchids that are not listed for a particular SNA, but they are there. Go to the Nature Conservancy web site and look at those sites that might be of interest to you. Of course State Parks are another good resource for the nature photographer. Talk to the naturalist at the park and see if they will help you in your search. Some will and believe me some will not. There are also various books that have been written regarding locating certain flowers, birds, animals etc. here in Minnesota.

But to really be honest the majority of my “findings” is from simply visiting certain areas and locating plants, animals etc. I have made it a habit to visit one new SNA, Prairie area, and bog every year. This has been my goal for the last 5 years or so. It is amazing how many new subjects that I have found, I may not have photographed them yet, but I know they are there. It took me 4 years to locate Western Prairie Fringed Orchids. I have found them, but after 8 years I have still do not have the photo that I want. This year was another very dry year and the orchids were not spectacular, so that means I will go back next year to try and capture the image that I vision,

Being a serious nature photographer also means we should try to be better naturalists. The more we learn about nature our knowledge in identifying subjects will make it a little easier to find them.



Pink Lady’s Slippers – By John Pennoyer



Showy Orchis – By John Pennoyer

Good Shooting
John Pennoyer

**“Requiem for a Pond”
By Ron Winch**

The hot July sun beat down mercilessly on the small one acre pond. Even the full surface coverage of duckweed did little to slow the evaporation. Day by day the water level receded until the frogs stopped singing. Green Herons and egrets recognized the potential of an easy meal and became frequent visitors dining on the shrinking frog population.

Finally one day the duckweed was no longer a smooth mat floating on the surface, but an undulating cover following the contours of the bottom. Green herons patrolled the area in search of an easy meal. Even a Blue Jay occasionally dropped by to dine on stranded young amphibians.

As the warm rays of spring sunshine melted ice along the edge of the pond, Wood Frogs cautiously made their way out from their hibernacula to the waters edge to begin their courtship ritual. Spring Peepers soon joined the chorus. The pond was alive! Even before the ice had disappeared from the pond a pair of mallards dropped in looking for a possible nesting site. Swimming slowly around the pond and feeding on duckweed, they languished in the warm sunlight filtering through the budding cottonwood trees. As time went by they became frequent visitors, but not residents.

Then came a pair of Canada Geese – soon to be joined by a third - a male, of course. The pond was alive with a flurry of activity as the two males battled for the favors of the female. With neck extended and low to the water, wings beating the water, the resident male, after many days, finally drove the intruder away. The pair would then alternate between feeding and resting on a three foot island only inches above the water. A nice place for solitude, but too small to raise a family, the geese flew off through the cottonwoods one last time. Tiger Salamanders, having bred and laid their eggs, wiggled their way out of the water amid a chorus of spring frogs songs and made their way into the surrounding woods.

The pond was alive with life when one morning there appeared a female Wood Duck with eight fuzzy ducklings. She was quite protective of them, as well she should be. Over the next two weeks, one by one, all the ducklings came up missing – and always at night. Possibly a Mink, Weasel or Great Horned Owl had feasted on a warm tender meal of young duckling.

Warm noonday sun enticed Eastern Painted Turtles to scale several floating logs. Sometimes seven or eight would crowd onto one log, soaking up the warmth and UV light to harden their shells. Eventually some made their way to sandy ground and deposited a goodly number of eggs, thus hopefully ensuring the propagation of their species.

Hours of darkness are exciting times to try to identify the calls of the various amphibians, and maybe hear a Great Horned Owl or a serenading Coyote pack.

Warm days of July took their toll on the pond. Surface water became less every day. The ducks were gone. The geese were gone. The frogs stopped singing. Green Herons were feeding on the remaining frogs.

And then it was quiet.

**May 2006 Salon Results (Judges - Rose
Duncan, Cynthia Fleury)**

Photographer	Title
Score of 8:	
Baker, Eric	Loon
Baker, Eric	Sunrise
Bertas, Mary Kay	Sego Canyon, UT
Cyr, Mariann	Snow Trillium
Ellenbecker, Dave	Trout Lillies #5
Gladitch, Marilyn	Woodland habitat
Goossens-Bryan, Betty	Costa Nesting
McDonough, Jean	Fawn in Forest
Pennoyer, John	Common Loon
Sanderson, Wayne	Eagle Eyes
Sanderson, Wayne	Egret
Vichich, Dave	Release 1
Vichich, Dave	Release 3
Score of 9:	
Aronson, Jim	Shooting Star Trio
Cleveland, Ron	White Sands
Cyr, Mariann	Rolland Grebe
Galambos, Ted	Kettle River Ice
Goossens-Bryan, Betty	SharpTail Display
Handsaker, Bill	Delicate Arch
Mattison, Drew	Waterfall
Sanderson, Virginia	Woodpecker
Sanderson, Virginia	Anhinga w Fish
Schulz, Alan	Eagle Detail
Score of 10:	
Gladitch, Marilyn	Pink Hepaticas Five
Graves, Rick	Eagle Three
Lahr, Ron	Cotton balls
McDonough, Jean	Duck Swimming
Miller, Joe	pinecones
Morgan, Jeff	Cormorant
Morgan, Jeff	Osprey
Schulz, Alan	Eagle Snow
Wilbrecht, Jon	Osprey

2006 to 2007 Meeting Schedule

Sept 20th - Ron Winch, Patagonia – Where the Wind was born.

Oct. 18th - Jim Heintzman, executive editor for Minnesota Weather guide.

Nov. 15th - Dewitt Jones Video.

Dec. 20th – Christmas party.

Jan. 17th - North Star Nature.

Feb. 21st - Brian Peterson, photographer with the Star Tribune.

Mar. 21st - John Pennoyer, working from blinds or hides.

Apr. 18th - Bernard(Bernie) Friel, High Speed Flash.

May 16th - L.C. Duke, Art and Composition, interaction with members.

The above schedule has been developed by Larry Duke, thanks Larry! If you have any questions, comments or suggestions for presentations, drop him an email (see the last page of this newsletter for his email address) or talk to him at one of the meetings.

Please Note:

The MNPC meeting location will be changing temporarily at some point this fall or winter. The heating plant for the Refuge Visitor Center is going to be replaced and the Center will be closed during that time. Visitor Center staff does not know the exact timing of the closure at this time. It could be October-December, November-January, or something else all together. The Bloomington REI (494 & Lyndale) meeting room has been reserved for December 20, January 17 and February 21. This is not an ideal facility for us, but it does have several things going for it -- it's free and it's not far from our normal meeting location. Seating space will be tight and we'll have to watch our time as we will need to be out of the room by 9 p.m. REI is not available for November 15. A request has been made for the use of an auditorium at MCAD for November, but approval has not been received as yet. There is a fee for the use of the MCAD space.

So don't operate on automatic pilot, be sure to check the meeting location for upcoming meetings.

-- Mariann

Dues:

Just a reminder, our good friend Jim Duncan needs you dues ASAP. I'm sure he has some new patches or other high priority needs that require your money – so lets give Jim all the help we can and get those \$\$\$ in!! The dues for 2006 – 2007 are: single membership \$20.00, family membership \$28.00. According to Jim, you can visit the MNPC web site, download the Membership form, print it out, fill it in and send to Jim along with the appropriate dues. Remember to print your name, address and e-mail address. For those of you without internet access, Jim will have forms at the next couple of meetings or you can contact him at the phone number on the last page of this newsletter.

Minnesota Botany

FYI

Change - it's the only constant. The Minnesota Nature Photography Club has sponsored the Minnesota Botany International for 24 years. It has been scheduled in early February each year. But this is changing. Early spring has become very crowded locally as other Internationals become circuits and increase their number of weekend judging's. The current plan is to hold the 25th Minnesota Botany International in the fall of 2007.

Mariann

Other Items of Interest:

Jim Brandenburg:

Jim has an upcoming exhibit at the University of Minnesota's Bell Museum of Natural History starting October 1. The subject is "Touch the Sky: Prairie Photographs". Jim will discuss his life and conservation work at a special opening event on September 30 (tickets required). Museum admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students and seniors and free to children less than 3. Admission is free on Sundays. For general information, call 612-624-9050 or log on to www.bellmuseum.org.

John Shaw:

From Drew Mattison on the MNNature Yahoo group.

Howdy-

For those that plan ahead into the Fall / Winter months, I just came across a two day workshop with John Shaw November 4-5 in Minneapolis. His website is:

<http://www.johnshawphoto.com/home.htm>

To sign up for the workshop, go to:
<http://www.photosafaris.com/>

By the way, if you have not joined the Yahoo group, I encourage you to do so. We have some very good discussions and can now post photos there as well. If you are interested, go to our club website for more information and a link to the Yahoo site.

Dan Walsh:

I received this via email for Dan. I have not used his services and know little about him. If you are interested, you can visit his website at www.forbesmillphoto.com.

My name is Dan Walsh and I am organizing several photography workshops and tours throughout the United States, Europe and New Zealand. I wish to bring the tours and workshops directly to the attention of those who will get the most out of them. The workshops are small, no more than 7 or 8 photographers and provide private transportation throughout the workshop and tour. Workshops outside of the continental United States also include accommodation and meals.

UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

We have a great New Zealand workshop this November. There are a few spots left.

2006/2007 West Coast & Hawaii Workshops

California Coast	Oct. 23-25 & April 10-12
California Redwoods	Oct. 20-22 & April 7-9
Carmel / Monterey Bay	Oct. 10-12
Death Valley	Dec. 10-13 & March 10-13
Hawaii	Feb. 3-10
San Francisco	Oct. 7-9 & Oct. 26-28
Sierra Nevada Mts.	Oct. 14-17, Dec. 6-9 & March 14-17
Wine Country	Nov. 24-26 & April 13-15
Yosemite	Jan. 10-13 & April 16-29

2006/2007 International Workshops

Ireland	May 20-31 & Aug. 4-15
Italy	May 11-19 & Aug. 19-27
New Zealand	Nov. 4-17 & Aug. 12-15

DISCOUNTS & GROUP RATES

Camera club members will receive \$50 off any tour in 2006 and 2007. We also offer special group rates if camera club members want to book an entire tour (7-8 people). Feel free to visit my website at www.forbesmillphoto.com. I am also available for personal phone contact.

ColdSnap Photography:

"Fall Color at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum"

Workshop: October 5-8, 2006

Exhibition: November, 2006

Course Prerequisite: Digital SLR Camera and Intermediate Photographic skills (Beginning digital skills ok.)

Cost: \$595.00 (Class limit of 20, breakfast included 4 days.)

This fall, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is offering a four-day advanced workshop called "Fall Color at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum." The workshop will be taught by Minnesota photographer John Gregor, and his assistant Randy Hagar, of ColdSnap Photography.

Instruction will include capturing in RAW mode, post-processing, using proper white balance, and fine-tuning exposure. Students will also learn how to assemble a body of photographic work, and how to prepare the images for exhibition in the Arboretum's Reedy Gallery in November. The workshop will include four days working in the field and in a computer classroom.

For more information and to register call the Education office at 952-443-1422 or visit www.arboretum.umn.edu to download a registration form. Additional information is available by calling ColdSnap Photography at (218) 834-0756.

Nature Photo Times

Published Sept.-May by the
Minnesota Nature Photography Club
www.minnesotanature.org

Editor: Don Nadreau, 763-377-4589,
dnadreau@usfamily.net
124 Ardmore Dr.
Golden Valley, MN 55422

President: Mariann Cyr 651-636-3738
mcyr@mmm.com
Vice Pres.: Larry Duke
lduke1601@earthlink.net
Treasurer: Jim Duncan 651-459-3558
jduncan001@comcast.net
Secretary - Rod Blesener 952.465.3420
rblesener@fishbowl-solutions.com

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month, September through May

6:15 PM - Set-up and Social Time
6:45 PM - Announcements and Business
7:00 PM - Program
8:00 PM - Nature Salon (Competition and Judge's Comments).

Meetings are held at:

Visitor Center, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge,
3815 East 80th Street
Bloomington, MN

Sept. 20, 2006 Meeting

Judges for the September Salon will be Vijay Karai and Dave Vichich.

September's Program:
"Patagonia – Where the Wind was Born" by Ron Winch

Please join us for an armchair visit to this spectacular part of the world, little known to North Americans, where flamingos, rheas and bamboo are common residents.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

