



Nature Photo Times

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

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From the President

Thanks to Ron Cleveland and Dean Repohl for putting on our February programs. We now know how easy it is to make your own photography book to show friends and relatives or just to have an easy way to keep memories of a great photo excursion. I know that I will be putting together my first book. New Foundland is also one of those places that both my wife and I have talked about visiting, it will be one of those places that may move higher on the list. Also thanks to Jane Myers for bringing all of the snacks at our meeting. Lots of great refreshments including some home made goodies!

Once again during our meeting the sound system failed us, so the board will be looking at possibly purchasing a new portable microphone system. If anyone has any ideas or works in this area, let me know; I would like to improve in this area at least by our September meeting.

Our program for March will be on Botanical Photography by Mariann Cyr. The program will not only be on doing close-ups of Minnesota's botanical subjects, but also on showing the plants in their native habitat. Not only is Mariann a great wildlife photographer, but she, like a lot of us, got her start on Minnesota's native plants and still, every spring and summer she is out searching for those botanical subjects. It will be a great program and have your questions ready!

March is one of those months that it is hard to find subjects to photograph; the Trumpeters, eagles etc. are in the process of going back to

their spring nesting areas. But by the end of March some of the migrating waterfowl that nest in Minnesota will begin arriving. So any open water can hold some unusual species of ducks that at other times of the year can be difficult to photograph. Crex Meadows in Western WI is one of my favorite places to search for migrating waterfowl. Also for you botanical photographers, one of the first plants to push their way through the snow is "Skunk Cabbage". This can be a very photogenic species; one of the best places is in Banning State Park, just remember to bring some water proof type foot wear!

Our club newsletter "Nature Photo Times" will be totally electronic starting with this issue. When Ron Cleveland our web master sends out his e-notes telling us that the newsletter is now on-line through our web site (www.minnesotanature.org) you will be able to read it at that time. If you have an incorrect or different e-mail address it is important for you to e-mail Jim Duncan (jduncan001@comcast.net) your correct address. This is going to save the club lots of postage. If you are not connected to the internet you will still receive a hard copy of the Nature Photo Times.

Good Shooting
John Pennoyer

Note: Carrol Henderson supervisor of the Non-Game division of the DNR is looking for photos of Dragonfly's and Damselfly's for possible use for the non-game poster. If you have any you can e-mail some low res jpegs to carrol.henderson@dnr.state.mn.us. He will than

be in touch with you if any of your images are being considered.

“Spring is on the Way”

By Ron Winch

Eagles! Eagles everywhere! As many as forty are in view at any one time. In the trees, over the bluffs, cruising the river valley and feeding at the ice edge.

After being icebound for months, the Mississippi is finally yielding to the warmth of spring. It's no longer a serpentine ribbon of ice. Wind and sun have worked their magic. Shorelines, in places, are ice free. The great ice sheet, rocked by wind and waves, calve myriads of ice flows into the river.

“Ice out.” The cry is heard up and down the valley. Spring is on the way. People and wildlife welcome the change. Fox and coyotes cautiously patrol the ice edge, hoping to feed on winterkill fish. Crows clean up the scraps after eagles dine on dead carp. Sunny days bring warm rising thermals and eagles float on this unseen column of air. Eagles can be seen sunning themselves in the naked cottonwoods along the river, riding the drifting ice floes and pigging-out on easy meals of fish. It feels so good. I could just lean back against a big old cottonwood and daydream – maybe even fall asleep.

But that was yesterday. Today a March storm puts a quiet hush over the valley. Snowflakes as large as feathers tumble down from low dark clouds. I can barely see the birds feeding in ice floes seventy-five yards away. In a huge old cottonwood overlooking the river five ghostly eagles, blanketed with snow, are difficult to discern as they blend into the muted snowy landscape. Snow cascades off their backs as they shift positions, revealing the dark silhouette of an eagle – the only dark blob in the landscape.

Few eagles are flying today, but I still look up frequently hoping to catch a glimpse of those seven foot wings. Down on the ice a dog – no, a coyote looking for an easy meal puts up a

feeding crow and takes advantage of a fee meal, a large carp. Snowflakes pelt my eyes as I look up again; two dark spots coverage. They circle, testing each other for some apparent weakness. Once found, aerial combat erupts. One eagle, tail down and with powerful braking wing beats, pulls up into a stall. The other quickly rolls onto its back. With talons extended the two birds lock onto each other. Wings flashing, each tries to best the other as they tumble earthward. First one, then the other beats its way to the dominant position. Like falling leaves they tumble down through the outer branches of an old cottonwood, parting only a few feet above the ground. With snowflakes in my eyes and snowmelt running down my face I watch as each goes its separate way. Wow!

Was the conflict a mating ritual or just a spring fling? Even the experts agree that it could be any one of these. No one gets into the mind of an eagle!

As you read this eagles are staging all along the great river. Open water unlocks their food supply as they wing their way north. Some will nest in the seven county metro area, but mostly they will disperse to the north.

Photo opportunities exist wherever the eagles are. Kind of like fishing: “you should have been here yesterday.” The DNR aerial count along the Mississippi yields about 700 eagles between the Twin Cities and the Iowa boarder. Some of the best viewing has always been just south of Red Wing, Reed’s Landing, and around Wabasha. Stop in at the National Eagle Center on Main Street in Wabasha for the latest information.

Good luck and good shooting.

Field Notes
**“It’s not always about getting the
image”**

By John Pennoyer

When we had that real cold snap in January, my wife and I decided to spend a few days on the North Shore around the Castle Danger area. It was full moon time and as usual I am always interested in capturing the full moon especially in a winter landscape. I was also hoping to capture some “ice-scapes”.

When I travel with my wife, it does not include camping or staying in the cheap joints that I select! She likes to stay in much nicer places so in this area she selects Grand Superior Lodge where the food is great and after a cold afternoon of shooting I can go in the lounge and sip on a hot toddy. Right across the street is the Rustic Cafe with some great home cooked meals. So you see the life of a photographer does not always have to be roughing it! We always try to choose locations that will allow me to get up early and photograph for a sunrise and the same for the afternoon is to be able to photograph about 1 ½ hours before sunset and stay for about ½ hour after sunset. The rest of the day we will do things together and for this winter outing it was snow shoeing and of course always spending a day driving the back roads looking for Minnesota Moose and wolves.

One of the trails that we really like is on the Baptism River. We have hiked or snow shoed one of the trails to the falls many times, but this time we decided to choose a trail that was not as well traveled. After strapping on the snow shoes we departed down the trail and we could see that many people had been on this trail since the last snow fall which was about a week ago. But as usual they turned down the trail to the falls and we took the other trail. Immediately the people tracks were almost non-existent. After going just a short distance a fresh rabbit track bounded across the trail and by the size of the

track my guess was that it was a snow shoe rabbit. Oh how I wished I could have gotten a photo of that rabbit as there are no snow shoe rabbits in my stock file. Deer tracks were every where but what was interesting was to really observe the tracks. You could see where the deer were feeding on the browse along the trail. Browse is their main source of protein in deep snow as they will eat the buds off of many shrubs/trees/bushes that are easy to get to. Most of the browse is only the very tips of the plant and I always like to say that once the size of the branch gets about the size of a pencil it really has no food value for the deer. After going just a little farther I noticed some polypore fungi growing on the side of a birch tree. Whitetails love this type of food source and of course some whitetail had totally stripped this polypore right to the bark except for a little higher up which the deer could not reach. Of course as I am spotting all of these signs of nature I am trying to educate my wife on all of my great discoveries. Further down the trail I spotted a wolf track. The snow was freshly kicked up so my mind was visioning that he was just around the corner and we spooked him. The tracks stayed with us for about 100 yards and there it was, he had scent marked a sapling tree. Which really only means that it was a male wolf and he peed! It was important that I showed this great nature story to my wife, but she was not very excited about observing pee! Of course we also had observed mouse tracks and a couple of other tracks that I was not able to identify. Our little snow shoe hiked lasted for about two hours. Not sure how far we went but probably about 2 ½ miles round trip. I did carry my photo pack with me so not one photo was taken. It was still a very pleasant afternoon with sunny skies and the temp around 0 F. We did not see one animal but we know they were there because their signs told us so. So my advice, when in the outdoors, keep a look out for subjects to photograph, but also note their signs which will tell you what was there before you.

I did get some great images of the full moon over split rock but my ice-scapes were only so because the fog over the lake would always

hide the sunrise! But that's OK, it just means I get to go back again.



"Lake Superior Sunrise"

By John Pennoyer



"Split Rock in Moonlight"

By John Pennoyer

Good Shooting

From the Editor:

At the last meeting, John Pennoyer may have mentioned the change in the way we distribute our newsletter. I have decided to give this a try this month to see how it works and to get your reactions. Let me know at the next meeting or via email what you think.

There are several benefits to this new distribution method. One, you will get the newsletter with colored photos via your computer screen. Many of the photos are much better in color than we can possibly reproduce them in a paper newsletter. Second, we can reduce the cost considerably by eliminating the printing and mailing of close to 80 letters a month. Third, you don't need to recycle the paper copies or file them (they are achieved online at our website.) Finally, Ron Cleveland adds many links and notices to the note he sends out telling you the newsletter is ready online.

I will continue to send hardcopy to the folks who don't have emails. I would, however, encourage everyone to get us a correct email address so we can add you to the list.

If this has caused undue hardship to anyone, I apologize.

Don Nadreau

MNPC Salon: February
2008

Judges: Larry Duke & Bill Handsacker

Photographer	Title	Score
Jenkins, John D.	Eye Contact	8
Jenkins, John D.	Reflection of Red	8
Ellenbecker, Dave	Mushrooms on Tree	8
Cleveland, Ron	Custer Bighorn (W)	8
Dolan Claire	Pairs (W)	8
Dykstra, John	Downy (W)	8
Ebbers, Matt	Fawns (W)	8
Galambos, Ted	Foam Whirl	8
Graves, Rick	Gimmie (W)	8
Hysell, Christine	Animal Tracks	8
McDonough, Jean	Water Buck and Baby	8
Morgan, Jeff	W Falls	8
Rehpohl, Dean	Four-in-Formation	8
Zosel, David	Red Squirrel (W)	8
Cleveland, Ron	Custer Red Wall	8
Cyr, Mariann	Rockhopper Chick in Mud	8
Galambos, Ted	Beach Pebbles	8
Graves, Rick	Yellow	8
Holt, Kristin	Buffalo Moonset (W)	8
Hoyt, David	Lone Wolf (W)	8
Hysell, Christine	Forcefull	8
Lahr, Ron	Floating	8
Morgan, Jeff	Ruddy Duck (W)	8
Rehpohl, Dean	Lopsided	8
Schulz, Alan	Cormmorant Rookery (W)	8
Wilson, Tom	Sunflower Bee	8
Zosel, David	Cottontail (W)	8
Cyr, Mariann	Raven (W)	9
Holt, Kristin	Winter Thermal (W)	9
Lahr, Ron	Chipmunk	9
Ramos, Carolle	Spiderwort	9
Schulz, Alan	Rockhopper (W)	9
Wilson, Tom	Sunset Geese (W)	9
Blesener, Rod	Swan Trio (W)	9
Ebbers, Matt	Old Faithful Rainbow	9
Olson, Mary	The Waiting Game	9
Ramos, Carolle	Eumorpha pandorus	9
Carroll, Tom	San Juan	10
Hoyt, David	Swanny River (W)	10
Vichich, Dave	Take Off (W)	10
Dykstra, John	CA Coast	10
McDonough, Jean	Silhouetted Cougar at Sunrise	10
Vichich, Dave	Cygnet (W)	10

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

6:00 PM - Set-up and Social Time
6:30 PM - Announcements and Business
6:45 PM - Program
7:45 PM - Nature Salon (Competition and
Judge's Comments).

Meetings are held at:

REI
750 West American Blvd
Bloomington, MN 55420

March Meeting
Wednesday March 19, 2008

Our program for March will be on Botanical
Photography by Mariann Cyr.

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