

# ALAMANCE PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

2012–2024

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## June 2024 Newsletter

[www.alamancephoto.com](http://www.alamancephoto.com)

[www.facebook.com/alamancephotoclub](http://www.facebook.com/alamancephotoclub)



Photo by Ken Sellers

### APC ACTIVITIES

Our club will be taking a different approach in 2024. While our Programs, PhotoShows and Field Trips will continue, all will be geared towards an overall theme of learning and practicing basic photography.

We will also be adding some workshops to the mix. We feel our planned activities will appeal to both novice and advanced photographers alike and provide an opportunity for us to learn more from each other.

See more about what we have planned for 2024 on pages 3 & 4. We hope this will be a fun and educational experience for all. – Your editor

## President's Comments—June 2024

By Keith O'Leary

Hi. Thanks to all who submitted photos for our PhotoShow last month on different light sources. Although we had fewer than normal submissions, we had some quite interesting shots and good discussion. 😊

George Bohannon also surprised us by bringing in the products of his most recent refurbishing project: the badly worn circa 1950's camera and wooden tripod that Mike King had brought to our April meeting! Wow...what a quick and dramatic restoration.

Dianne Sellers has decided to step down as our club Treasurer and I want to personally thank her for serving our club well for the last 2½ years. We presented her with a token of our appreciation at our May meeting and announced that George Siple will take over this position effective immediately. Thanks George! As a result of this transition, we are now seeking a club Secretary. We are also seeking an

Exhibit Chair and PhotoShow Chair, so if you are interested in learning more about any of these positions, please reach out to me during any of our gatherings or simply email [alamancephoto@gmail.com](mailto:alamancephoto@gmail.com).

I'd like to remind you to check for any firmware updates for your equipment to get the best out of your cameras and lens. I checked recently and found I had a couple. Please continue reading for more info on upcoming events and thanks for your participation and for inviting others to join us. I hope you are enjoying our journey this year as we get "Back to Basics". I know I am. Stay well and happy shooting!

P.S. I am in the process of finalizing quotes for new club shirts. More details coming soon!

Keith O'Leary

## APC BOARD

President	Keith O'Leary	Interim Exhibit Chair	Christie O'Leary
Vice President	John Reich	Outings/Field Trips	Hugh Comfort
Secretary	<i>open</i>	Membership	Ken Sellers
Treasurer	George Siple	Web Master	Christie O'Leary
Interim PhotoShow Chair	Keith O'Leary	Editor	Ray Munns

## 2024 Alamance Photography Club Activities

- Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>** Program: Sean Leahy – Birds from Colombia
- Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>** PhotoShow: The Rule of Thirds (and ‘Back to Basics’ Ice Cream Social)
- Mar. 18<sup>th</sup>** PhotoShow: Photograph **three (3)** of the following:  
Close-up of a person  
2 to 3 people interacting  
Action shot  
Animal shot  
Nature shot
- Apr. 15<sup>th</sup>** Program: George Bohannon – Camera Basics with a Twist of History
- May 4<sup>th</sup>** Field Trip/Workshop:  
Place: Burlington Arboretum  
Objective: Understanding Light & Exposure  
Exercise: Experiment with different light sources and exposure settings.
- May 20<sup>th</sup>** PhotoShow: One subject using 2 different light sources
- June 1<sup>st</sup>** Field Trip/Workshop:  
Place: Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro  
Objective: Understanding Depth of Field, Composition, Angle of View  
Exercise: Experiment taking same compositions with shallow (wide aperture) and deep (narrow aperture) depths of field and from different angles.
- June 17<sup>th</sup>** PhotoShow: One Subject with 2 Different depths of field
- June 29<sup>th</sup>** Field Trip/Workshop:  
Place: Burlington City Park  
Objective: Understanding Stop Action vs Motion Blur  
Exercise: Experiment taking stop action & capturing motion blur from same or similar subjects.
- July 15<sup>th</sup>** PhotoShow: Stop Action & Motion Blur of Same (or Similar) Subject
- Aug. 19<sup>th</sup>** PhotoShow: One subject from 2 different angles/perspectives
- Sep. 16<sup>th</sup>** Program: Photo Editing Demonstration/Workshop (Dan Walker)
- Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>** Program: Dr. Jim Herrington – Drone Photography
- Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>** PhotoShow: 5-to-8 Picture Photo Story by Youth/Student Participants
- Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>** Christmas Party, Slideshow, Buy/Sell/Swap

## 2024 Programs

JAN: Sean Leahy – Birds from Colombia

APR: George Bohannon – Camera Basics with a Twist of History

SEP: Photo Editing Workshop/Presentation (Dan Walker)

OCT: Jim Harrington – Drone Photography

## 2024 PhotoShows

FEB: The Rule of Thirds (and ‘Back to Basics’ Ice Cream Social!)

MAR: Photograph **three (3)** of the following:

Close-up of a person

2 to 3 people interacting

Action shot

Animal shot

Nature shot

MAY: One subject with 2 Different light sources

JUN: One Subject with 2 Different depths of field

JUL: Stop Action & Blur Motion of Same (or Similar) Subject

AUG: One subject from 2 different angles/perspectives

NOV: 5-to-8 Picture Photo Story by Youth Participants

## **(Tentative) Field Trip/Work Shops**

5/4: Place: Burlington Arboretum  
Objective: Understanding Light & Exposure  
Exercise: Experiment with different light sources and exposure settings.

6/1: Place: Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro  
Objective: Understanding Depth of Field, Composition, Angle of View  
Exercise: Experiment taking same compositions with shallow (wide aperture) and deep (narrow aperture) depths of field and from different angles.

6/29: Place: Burlington City Park  
Objective: Understanding Stop Action vs Blur Motion  
Exercise: Experiment taking stop action and capturing blur motion from same or similar subjects.

**May 2024 PhotoShow:** On May 20th we had a great PhotoShow with our members using their talents to show *“one subject using 2 different light sources”*.

*Unfortunately, due to an email malfunction, David Hall’s photos were not included. We didn’t want you to miss them so here they are for your appreciation. Thanks David!*



Artificial light -- ambient room lighting with the wine holder highlighted with a large focus-able flashlight, then shot with a bounce flash; 1/60 @ f4.5, ISO 3200

Natural light -- sunlight from adjacent window 1/60 @ f4.5, ISO 1250



Both photos edited with ON1 Photo RAW. I used ON1s NoNoise which made a noticeable difference.



# May 20<sup>th</sup> PhotoShow Entries



Photos by  
John Reich

Photos by  
George  
Bohannon



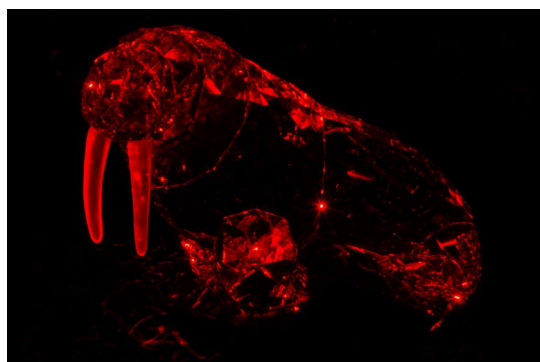
Photos by  
Bob Finley

# More May 20<sup>th</sup> PhotoShow Entries



Photos by  
Keith O'Leary

Photos by  
Hugh Comfort



Photos by  
George Siple

Photos by  
Ray Munns





# May 4<sup>th</sup> Field Trip at the Burlington Arboretum

*(in the rain)*



Photos by Keith O'Leary







## WEBMASTER NOTES

Our website: <https://www.alamancephoto.com/> is a great way:

- To introduce potential members to the club.
- To stay up to date on the club events.

**Christie O'Leary—Webmaster**

## APC Membership Corner

June 2024

Do you know of someone who likes being around others who enjoy photography? If you do, encourage them to check out the Alamance Photography Club for up to 2 months at no charge. Our "Back to Basics" program theme for this year will give everyone an opportunity to sharpen their picture-taking skills and learn new skills. Along the way, you will also have regular opportunities to show what you have learned through Photo Shows and Local Field Trips. Yearly memberships are as follows: Adults-\$42, Family-\$62, and Students-\$15.

**Ken Sellers**

**Membership Chair**

**In Memory of**

**Meike Cryan**

**APC member since 2013**

Meike Cryan

Tuesday, 29 Aug 1939 - Monday, 06 May 2024



## June 1<sup>st</sup> Field Trip: Exploring Depth of Field & Angle of View

The depth of field is the zone within a photo that appears acceptably sharp and in focus.

In every picture, there is a point of focus – the spot where you actually focus your lens. But there is also an area both in front of and behind your point of focus that *also* appears sharp, and that area corresponds to the depth of field.

Images that have a very large zone of acceptable sharpness are said to have a *deep depth of field*. Deep DoF photos tend to be sharp from front to back; it's a popular look in landscape photography, where you often want to show every little detail from the scene.

On the other hand, some images have very small zones of focus, which is known as shallow depth of field. A shallow DoF photo is generally immediately recognizable because the subject will look tack-sharp while the background is rendered as a smooth, creamy blur. *(from digital-photography-school.com)*

**Come join us at 10:00 a.m. at the Center for Creative Leadership at:**

**1 Leadership Place, Greensboro, NC 27410**

Please assemble under the shelter at the entrance upon arrival as Keith must check in with the guard when we all arrive and before we leave. There will be no classes that day, so should just be us. There is a walking trail on the grounds and we will also be allowed access to the internal nicely landscaped courtyard. Once in the courtyard though, we'll have to exit via the sidewalk between the buildings as the doors will lock.



A note from Laura Gibson: *There may be a fawn in the courtyard (no evidence yet, but fawn have been born in there for the last 3 years) so please watch your step and if you see one, please photograph from afar.*

*Check out the following videos to learn more about depth of field and come ready to practice!*

[Depth of Field - General](#)

[Blurry Backgrounds](#)

[Landscape Focusing](#)

[Hyperfocal Distance](#)

Once you feel you have captured some good shots of the same subject with different depths of field, you can practice various angles of view of the same subject in preparation for our August PhotoShow!

## June 17<sup>th</sup> PhotoShow - “One Subject, Two (2) Different DoF”

Keith O’Leary, Interim PhotoShow Chair

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This month’s photo show theme is a little different. Everyone will submit 2 photos. The 2 photos will be of the same subject but taken at different depths of field.

*Note: See June 1<sup>st</sup> Field Trip page for more info on Depth of Field.*

### **Submission Guidelines:**

Number of Entries: Two (2) entries per member

Format: .jpg

File Naming: Please name your photos using the following format:

Firstname.lastname\_01, \_02

Examples: john.doe\_01.jpg john.doe\_02.jpg

Size: Between 1 and 25 MB

Email: Send all images to [apcphotoshow@gmail.com](mailto:apcphotoshow@gmail.com)

Email Subject Line: include the month of the PhotoShow and your name

Example: Photos for May PhotoShow – John Doe

Entry Deadline: **Wednesday, June 12, 2024**

### **Please Note:**

*Submissions that do not adhere to the guidelines above may be returned.*

*If you have any issues with formatting or submitting, please let us know at [apcphotoshow@gmail.com](mailto:apcphotoshow@gmail.com) and we will be happy to assist. Also, let us know if your submitted photo is not acknowledged within a few days and/or by the deadline.*

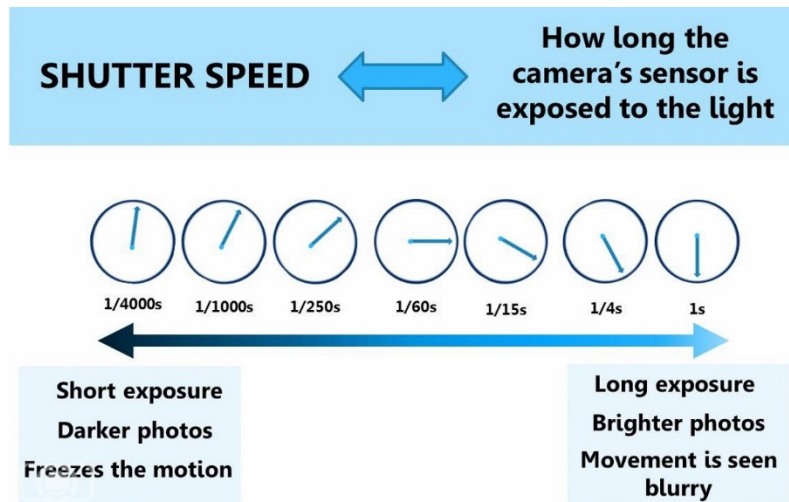


## June 29<sup>th</sup> Field Trip: Exploring Stop Action & Motion Blur

Stop action photography involves faster shutter speeds to “freeze” moving subjects.

Motion blur photography is an artistic approach to capturing motion where either your moving subject appears blurred or the subject is relatively sharp and the background and/or other objects are blurred denoting motion.

It is best to shoot action in burst mode to increase your chances of obtaining your desired shot.



Click [HERE](#) and [HERE](#) for articles on motion photography from digital-photography-school.com



**Come join us at 10:00 a.m. at the Carousel at Burlington City Park:**

1386 S. Main St  
Burlington, NC 27215



Check out the following videos to learn more about action photography and come ready to practice!

[Picking the Right Shutter Speed](#)

[Panning Photography](#)

[Birds in Flight Photography Tips](#)

## Exhibit Notes

### Alamance Photography Club's Fall Exhibit @ Alamance Arts:

**\*\*ATTENTION\*\* All dates for fall exhibit have changed. Please read carefully!**

- Title of Exhibit: 'The Beauty of Nature' (*so please choose your photographs accordingly*)
- Have a maximum of five photographs to exhibit. However, please choose your top two or three. Depending on the number of participants, the allowed photos to exhibit may need to be limited to 2 or 3.
- Will be held in the Sister Galleries (Patrick & Rhyme) of Alamance Arts in Graham.
- **September 18, 2024 – October 18, 2024**
- Each photographer may provide a brief biography (4 to 5 sentences) and/or artist statement. Since Alamance Arts would like these digitally, please send them to Christie and then she will be sure to forward them to Alamance Arts.
- Christie O'Leary, interim exhibit chair, will be turning in the required paperwork and high-quality digital images for promotional purposes.
- Below is the deadlines for items to be sent to Christie.

#### Tentative Timeline

Task	Target Date
If you desire to have your photo piece(s) considered for promotional purposes for the exhibit, please send high quality digital images of your top two.	July 6, 2024
1) Inventory List (Will be provided soon) 2) Brief Biography and/or artist statement with pieces	August 21, 2024
Delivery day of photography to Alamance Arts	Sept. 10 <sup>th</sup> after 11 am Sept 11 <sup>th</sup> after 10 am
Exhibit	Sept. 18 <sup>th</sup> – Oct. 18th
Reception (Open to public)	Sept. 26 <sup>th</sup> (5:30 pm to 7:30 pm)

- Please send all the required information by the target date listed. Failure to do so will result in you being disqualified from the exhibit.
- Please send the required information to [apcphotoexhibit@gmail.com](mailto:apcphotoexhibit@gmail.com)

**\*Already signed contracts will be valid. The dates will be changed for you to initialize soon.**

**\*If you desire to participate and have not already signed a contract, please notify Christie. She will write your name down and send you a new contract as soon as Alamance Arts provides it.**

If you have any questions, contact Christie O'Leary at 336-693-8269 or at: [apcphotoexhibit@gmail.com](mailto:apcphotoexhibit@gmail.com)

Looking forward to our Fall exhibit,  
Christie O'Leary (Interim Exhibit Chair)



## Table Talkers



**Wednesday, June 5, 12:00 noon**

**Location: The Blend & Co.**

**127 E. Front St. in Burlington**

**Mio Winkle**

## APC Trading Post

Submit brief descriptions of photography items you would like to sell, swap or purchase to Ray Munns ([raymunns@bellsouth.net](mailto:raymunns@bellsouth.net)) no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. Please include your name, contact info (phone and/or email) and if each item is for sale or something you are looking to purchase. Also notify Ray when items should be removed from the newsletter.



# BACK TO BASICS

## Camera Controls

*Learn the Basics of Your Digital SLR Camera*

By Attila Kun

### 1 Camera Controls



### 2 Image Sensor



## *Back to Basics— Camera Controls . . . Continued*

### **2 Image Sensor**

Since the dawn of photography, cameras have captured and stored images on glass plates or on film. Today, digital cameras capture the images on a nifty piece of technology – the image sensor.

The image sensor is made up of millions of light sensitive photodiodes set on a grid, where each photodiode records a tiny portion of the image as a numeric value that corresponds to a specific brightness level, which is then used to create your image.



Image sensors, whether they are CCD or CMOS, vary from camera to camera but they're basically the same, and the megapixel count shouldn't be a priority in the decision-making process when buying a camera. Why? Because the size of the sensor is actually more important than the number of megapixels.

### **3 Camera Lens**



A lens is an optical component made out of glass, high quality plastic, or ceramic, which captures the light and assembles it on a point of focus at the matte screen passing through a condensing lens inside the camera.

If you are looking for ease of handling, you can go for point-and-shoot cameras with fixed lenses. However, if you are concerned about picture quality, you should invest in a digital SLR (DSLR) camera with interchangeable lenses.

Interchangeable lenses allow you to have much more control of your images, and to be far more creative than you can be with a point-and-shoot camera. All in all, DSLR cameras produce a more professional photograph.

## Back to Basics— Camera Controls . . . Continued

### 4 Camera Modes

DSLR cameras are equipped with a variety of shooting modes that increase the automatic decision making of the camera.

These cameras, thankfully, have semi-automatic and manual modes too, which put the control back in your hands for more technical and creative applications.

In PROGRAM mode, the camera sets the exposure, but the user can adjust the white balance, ISO, focusing and metering.

There are two semi-automatic modes: 1) Shutter Priority (Tv) is where the user sets the shutter speed and the camera determines the aperture. Shutter Priority allows the user to control how “the action” is captured. 2) Aperture Priority (Av) is where the user selects the aperture and the camera determines the shutter speed. Aperture Priority allows the user to control the depth-of-field.

### 5 Built-in Flash

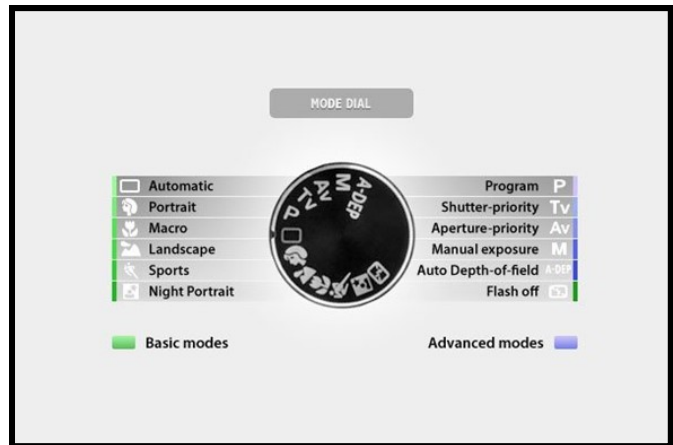


A built-in flash is provided with most digital cameras.

The camera’s computer determines the need for flash according to the exposure metering, focusing, and zoom systems. On compact cameras, the built-in flash is triggered to go off in perfect sync with the shutter, but it’s hard to control the timing and intensity of the flash. This can

result in washed-out photos.

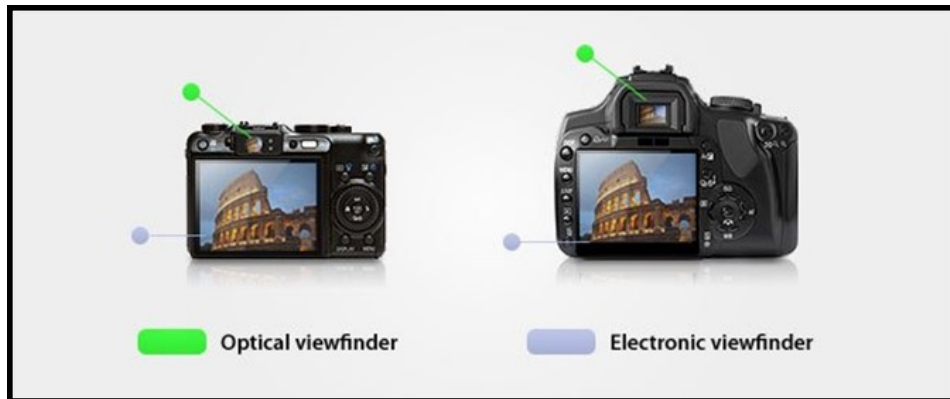
DSLRs have pop-up flashes that can be controlled in various ways to be in-sync with the shutter or drag behind the shutter; in addition the intensity can be manipulated in accordance with the overall light of the scene. DSLR cameras allow for more pleasing and artistic use of the flash.





## Back to Basics— Camera Controls . . . Continued

### 6 Viewing System



Most digital cameras have two viewing systems – the optical viewfinder and the electronic viewfinder.

While both systems show you what the lens sees, the electronic viewfinder can tell you other things about the nature of your digital image. One area where the electronic viewfinder is superior is in determining color balance. The electronic viewfinder can show where the highlights are overexposing (and if you'll need to compensate). What is great is that you'll see this in real-time.

The optical viewfinder puts you directly inside the mechanical world of the camera and tends to perhaps give you a better sense of the composition because you're seeing exactly what the lens is seeing, not an electronic approximation.

*Exposure Guide*

## Butterfly Photography Tips

Butterflies are beautiful insects and there are thousands of species in habitats all over the world, so the capacity to photograph them is endless. Butterflies often have intricate designs on their wings in addition to different color combinations. In order to photograph a butterfly you need the right equipment, plus lots of patience.

### Zoom to See Details

Butterflies are small; therefore to truly capture a butterfly's beauty so that all the detail can be seen, one must have the right equipment – either a macro lens or a zoom lens with a macro mode. If you are outdoors, then a good macro lens with a 100mm focal length will make sure you are far enough away so as not to disturb the butterfly. Place the camera on a tripod to



avoid camera shake and use a large aperture (f/2.8-f/5.6) for a blurred background. You are now ready.

### Take Creative Pictures



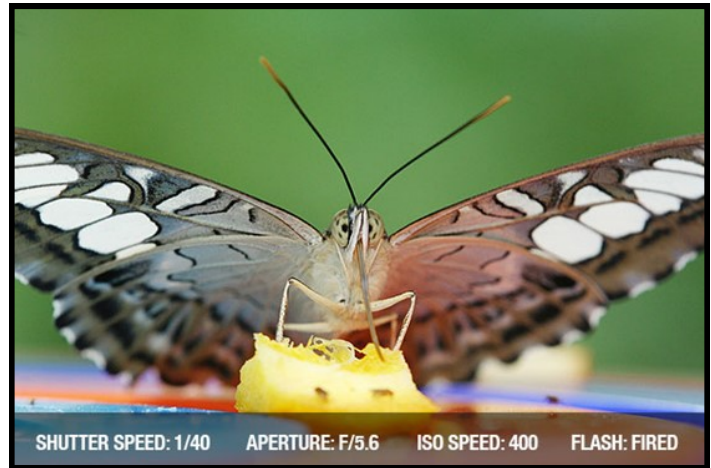
If you are fortunate to have a butterfly rest on you or on a friend, be quick and ready to take the shot. A macro lens or even a standard lens would be able to catch the butterfly in someone's hand. Once again, use a fairly shallow aperture (f/5.6 or so) to blur the background while making sure all of the details of the wings are still in focus.

## *Butterfly Photography Tips . . . Continued*

### **Super Macro Shots**

Extreme close ups can only be achieved with a specialty macro lens, normally 50mm to 100mm that has a manual setting, as the auto focus is probably not quick or quiet enough to capture the butterfly prior to any moment. Be sure to use a tripod or beanbag to keep the camera steady, wait for the butterfly to land and at the decisive moment take the shot.

Consider using a ring flash for an even, shadow-less finish.



### **In-Action**



A sure fire way to catch some butterflies in action is to watch flowers that they are fond of (this will require some pre-planning and research on your part). Once you have found these flowers, focus your camera on that area and use a wide aperture (f/2.8-f/5.6) and a relatively fast shutter speed (maybe 1/1600s) and then wait for a butterfly to appear. Look for colorful flowers and use continuous shooting mode if possible as the moment may pass in seconds. While it might not be possible to predict exactly what a butterfly will do, it's important to use the continuous shooting mode to get as many photos possible and review what you have later.

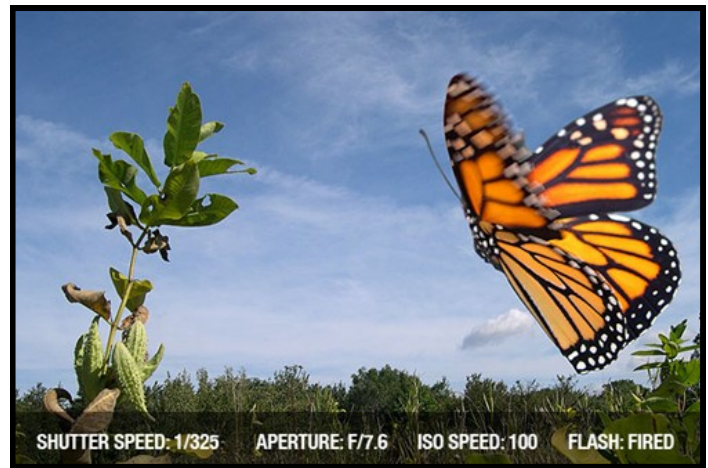


## *Butterfly Photography Tips . . . Continued*

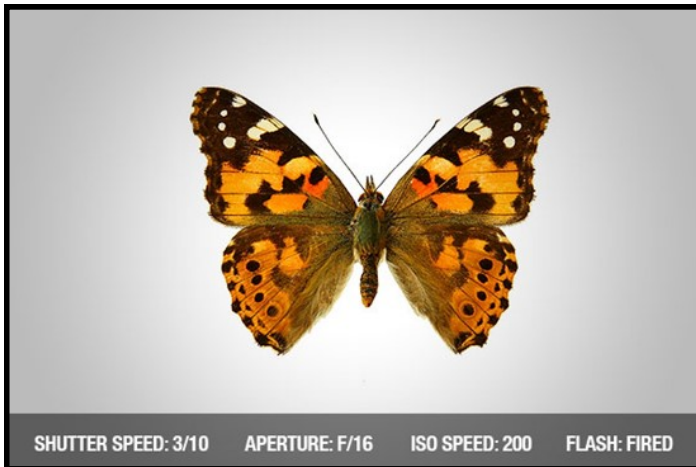
### **Caught in Flight**

Like all creatures in nature, it's nearly impossible to predict where and when they will move, but with butterflies you know that they will land on flowers, so you can wait by those and one will eventually land. It will test your patience, so you MUST be ready and not get bored during the long lull. To capture a butterfly in flight you might want to lie on the ground or get as

low as you can so you are underneath them when they fly by. Set the mode dial to TV (Shutter-Priority) mode and choose a fast shutter speed of 1/250s or faster. Pre-focus to an area where you can predict the butterfly will go and be ready to snap. Continuous or multi-shooting mode can be useful here.



### **Shoot Indoors**



Occasionally you will be able to capture (and not kill!) a butterfly and temporarily bring it indoors to photograph. You will need a clean white card and an inexpensive box with some holes in the side for air. Lighting can be studio lights or natural window light. Bring the butterfly inside and allow it to settle. When it does, use a macro lens to capture a sharp image, using f/16, or f/32 if you want everything in focus, which is recommended because of the short, white background.

## **Butterfly Photography Tips . . . Continued**

### **Recommended Settings**

For the most stunning effect, use a shallow depth of field; f/4 is ideal because you are working a subject at such close proximity. You will be working fast, so you need a quick lens that you need to be able to focus at the drop of a dime. Sports mode is ideal for photographing butterflies, provided you are using a macro lens and not relying on macro mode, since you can only choose one mode at a time.

### **Recommended Equipment**

Other than butterfly conservatories, the majority of your butterfly photography will be outside, so you'll need a telephoto zoom lens with macro mode. Choose one that allows you to switch between manual and auto focus. A macro lens is extremely useful for true close-up photographs as it will focus on the smallest of items. Besides macro lenses, there are less expensive alternatives like extension tubes and lens magnifiers which can be used on a standard lens. Use a tripod or a monopod whenever possible and a cable release or the camera's self-timer to avoid camera shake.

### **Conclusion**

When photographing butterflies, patience is important. As with all of nature's creatures, butterflies cannot be forced to go somewhere they don't want to, so you might have to wait for hours and hours for the right moment. Be observant and keep your camera equipment at the ready. The images that you obtain will be rewarding, striking, and will be ones to be proud of.

*Exposure Guide*

# 10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography

By Tim Gilbreath

The golden hour. Even if you haven't been doing landscape photography for very long, you've undoubtedly heard the term thrown around. As photographers, we're in the business of capturing light, and it rarely gets better than the soft, golden rays of the early morning or late afternoon sun.

During this window – which generally lasts around an hour – the light takes on an other-worldly quality. It blankets the landscape with warm hues, adding a touch of softness and depth that you won't find during any other time of the day.

Unfortunately, capturing breathtaking golden-hour landscape photos isn't as simple as pointing your camera and clicking away. Working around sunrise and sunset comes with several major challenges, and to ensure outstanding images, you'll need to apply a few tricks and tips of the trade. That's why I've put together this article – to help you unlock the full potential of nature's most magical time!

Below, I share a variety of helpful advice, including gear recommendations, ideal camera settings, and tips for taking advantage of that gorgeous light. So if you're ready to start capturing sun-drenched landscapes guaranteed to make your heart beat faster, let's dive right in!

## 1. Pay attention to the direction of the light

When it comes to capturing stunning golden-hour landscape photographs, understanding the direction of light is key. During this magical hour, the sun hangs low in the sky, casting a warm glow over the landscape. But here's the thing: Depending on the sun's position, the landscape will be hit from different angles, creating unique lighting effects that can transform your images.

Let's break it down. There are three main lighting directions to consider: front light, back-light, and sidelight. Front light occurs when the light is coming from the front, illuminating the scene directly. This effect is often more straightforward and descriptive, showcasing the landscape in a clear way.

## **10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography . . . Continued**

On the other hand, sidelight occurs when the light is coming from the side, creating beautiful shadows, emphasizing texture, and adding depth to the scene. And then we have backlight, where the light is coming from behind the subject, a striking and artistic choice that can make for captivating images.



Here, the sun sits somewhere between a back lit angle and a side lit angle. The resulting photo includes a lot of depth!

While many landscape photographers are drawn to back light and side light for their dramatic effects, don't underestimate the power of front light. It can produce equally stunning results and allow you to capture

the landscape in all its glory.

The key is to pay attention to the position of the sun when you arrive at your location. Observe how it hits the landscape and consider the lighting direction that best suits your creative vision for each scene.

### **2. Look for some clouds**

Looking to create awe-inspiring golden-hour landscape photos? Clouds can be the extra ingredient that elevates your images from ordinary to extraordinary. They possess the remarkable ability to transform a boring image into a mesmerizing display of texture and ethereal beauty.

Of course, there is such a thing as too many clouds! A completely overcast sky will generally dampen the intensity of your photos. What you want is partly cloudy skies, which will infuse your compositions with plenty of drama and magic.

Before embarking on your photography adventure, it's worth checking the weather forecast to gauge the cloud cover in your desired location. But don't despair if you find yourself facing a cloudless sky during the golden hour. Instead, try to explore more non-conventional shots, such as minimalist compositions where simplicity takes center stage.



Remember that, even in the absence of clouds, the golden-hour light can still work its magic!



## *10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography . . . Continued*

### **3. Bring a tripod**

If you plan to shoot during the golden hours, a sturdy tripod becomes your trusty companion. As the sun descends lower in the sky during this magical hour, the light becomes weaker. This can result in underexposed images if you don't adjust your camera settings accordingly. One way to compensate for the diminishing light is by lengthening your shutter speed. However, doing so without a stable tripod can lead to unwanted blurriness in your shots.

Now, I know what you might be thinking: Tripods can be cumbersome and a hassle to carry around. But the benefits far outweigh any minor inconveniences. In addition to ensuring your photos stay sharp, tripods force you to slow down and carefully consider each composition. You might even find that working with a tripod enhances your overall photography experience.

Of course, if you find yourself without a tripod, there are alternative options to explore. You can keep your shutter speed relatively fast by increasing the ISO or widening the aperture, though these adjustments do come with trade-offs. Boosting the ISO can introduce noise artifacts, while widening the aperture narrows the plane of focus, resulting in blurry portions of the scene. Therefore, while a tripod isn't a necessity, I do highly recommend it!

### **4. Scout the location in advance**

To make the most of the fleeting golden-hour light, it's essential to scout your location in advance. This allows you to familiarize yourself with the environment, discover potential compositions, and anticipate how the sun's light will interact with the landscape.

If you plan to shoot during the early morning, scouting becomes even more critical as you'll need to find a composition and set up your equipment in the dark.

Consider allocating time before your planned shoot to visit the location. It can be days in advance or just a few hours (if you're shooting in the evening). During your scouting trip, pay attention to the various subjects that catch your eye. Visualize how the sunlight will paint the scene, bringing out textures and casting shadows.



## *10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography . . . Continued*

### **5. Consider waking up for the sunrise**

While many photographers head out around sunset, there are significant benefits to setting your alarm and venturing out to witness the magical moments of sunrise. It's a time when the world is very tranquil and the soft light of dawn casts a delicate glow upon the landscape.

One of the greatest advantages of shooting at sunrise is the solitude it offers. As the rest of the world sleeps, you'll find yourself immersed in a serene setting, free from the distractions of crowds and bustling activity. This sense of solitude not only enhances your creative focus but also allows you to capture scenes without worrying about people accidentally stepping into your frame.

In addition to the peaceful ambiance, the morning hours often bring less wind compared to the rest of the day. This means you have a better chance of capturing pristine reflections in bodies of water, adding an extra layer of beauty and tranquility to your landscape compositions.

Plus, there is something truly magical about witnessing the sunrise itself. It's a remarkable experience that can connect you with the beauty and rhythm of the natural world – so don't be afraid to get up a bit earlier and embrace the unique rewards of shooting at sunrise!



### **6. Use the right aperture and shutter speed**



Setting the appropriate aperture and shutter speed is essential to achieve stunning golden-hour landscape shots. Here's what I recommend:

To keep the entire scene sharp, opt for a narrow aperture. Generally, f/8 works well when your composition doesn't involve elements very close to the camera. However, if

there are prominent foreground elements, consider using an aperture of f/11 or beyond. But be cautious not to exceed f/16; otherwise, you might get blur due to diffraction.

## *10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography . . . Continued*

When it comes to shutter speed, a longer exposure is often necessary during the golden hour due to the diminishing light. If you have a tripod, you can use longer shutter speeds without worrying about camera shake. In Manual mode, you can set the shutter speed with the help of the exposure bar in the camera viewfinder. Alternatively, if you use Aperture Priority mode, the camera will automatically select a suitable shutter speed for a well-exposed image.

Pro tip: Don't shy away from experimenting with ultra-long shutter speeds to capture the mesmerizing movement of water or clouds. By narrowing your aperture to around f/16 and maintaining an ISO of 100, you can achieve relatively slow shutter speeds during sunrise and sunset.

Finally, if you desire even longer shutter speeds or find yourself shooting when the sun is slightly higher in the sky, a neutral density filter can be a game-changer. It'll reduce the influx of light, preventing overexposure and allowing for extended exposure times.

### **7. Use GND filters or HDR techniques**

During the golden hours, you'll often encounter scenes with significant variations in brightness. This combination of dark shadows and bright skies can pose a challenge for your camera's sensor, making it difficult to capture all the details in a single shot. Fortunately, there are two techniques you can employ to overcome this hurdle.

One option is to use graduated neutral density (GND) filters. They're specifically designed to balance the exposure between the sky and the foreground. By placing the darker portion of the filter over the sky, you can reduce the brightness levels while keeping the foreground properly exposed. GND filters are highly effective, although they can be a bit cumbersome to set up and require careful positioning.



### **10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography . . . Continued**

Alternatively, you can try high dynamic range (HDR) techniques. With this approach, you capture a series of shots at different exposure levels, typically bracketing to capture details in the highlights, midtones, and shadows. Later, you merge these shots using post-processing software like Lightroom Classic, allowing you to blend the properly exposed areas from each image into one final photograph. HDR can be a viable option and has fast become a favorite among professionals.

GND filters provide an in-camera solution while HDR techniques offer a post-processing solution. Both methods have their merits, so it's worth researching to find the one that suits your style and preferences.

Remember, the goal is to achieve a balanced exposure where both the sky and the foreground retain their details. By using GND filters or HDR shooting, you can overcome the limitations of your camera's dynamic range and capture the full beauty of the golden-hour landscapes. So whether you prefer the hands-on approach of filters or the post-processing finesse of HDR, these techniques will both be valuable tools in your photographic arsenal.

#### **8. Try some landscape silhouettes**

As I explained in the previous section, landscape photography often revolves around capturing intricate details in both the foreground and the sky. While these images are undeniably stunning, certain scenes are difficult to photograph without filters or HDR techniques. What if you just want to enjoy some straightforward photography?



That's where the magic of silhouette shots comes in. Instead of aiming for perfect detail, you can focus on capturing landscape silhouettes against a beautiful sky.

To create a silhouette, position yourself so that a bright portion of the sky serves as the backdrop. Frame your shot, ensuring that the landscape elements you want to silhouette are prominent. Now, lock in the suggested exposure for the bright sky. Manual mode is particularly suitable for this technique, but Aperture Priority can also work well.

Now, lock in the suggested exposure for the bright sky. Manual mode is particularly suitable for this technique, but Aperture Priority can also work well.



### **10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography . . . Continued**

Once you've taken a shot, review it on your camera's LCD screen. A successful silhouette will result in a dark foreground and a detailed sky, forming a captivating contrast. If the exposure isn't ideal, don't be discouraged. Adjust the exposure compensation or the shutter speed until you achieve the desired outcome.

Silhouette photos can add a touch of mystique to your portfolio. The approach allows you to focus on the shapes and contours of the landscape – and create visually compelling images that evoke emotion and spark the viewer's imagination.

#### **9. Don't forget to post-process your golden-hour landscapes**

The beauty of golden-hour lighting is undeniable, but to truly unlock the full potential of your landscape shots, it's crucial to spend time enhancing them through post-processing. This is where you can take your already stunning images and elevate them to a whole new level.

One of the first steps in post-processing your golden-hour landscapes is to work with the white balance. By adjusting the temperature and tint sliders, you can achieve a more natural look or even create a deliberately cooler or warmer tone that elevates the overall mood of your image.

Next, pay attention to the details in your highlights and shadows. Golden-hour scenes often have a wide dynamic range, with deep shadows and bright skies, and this can result in a loss of detail in both areas. Happily, you can use post-processing tools to recover lost details, ensuring that the important elements of your image are well-exposed.

Color grading can also be a powerful technique to enhance the depth and drama of your golden-hour landscapes. By adjusting the color hues, you can create a unique and personalized look. Experiment with different color combinations to find the one that evokes the desired emotions and reinforces the atmosphere you're after.

Lastly, consider applying a subtle vignette to push the viewer's eye toward the main subject of your image. Be cautious not to overdo it, however; restraint is the key to maintaining a natural and balanced look.



### **10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography . . . Continued**

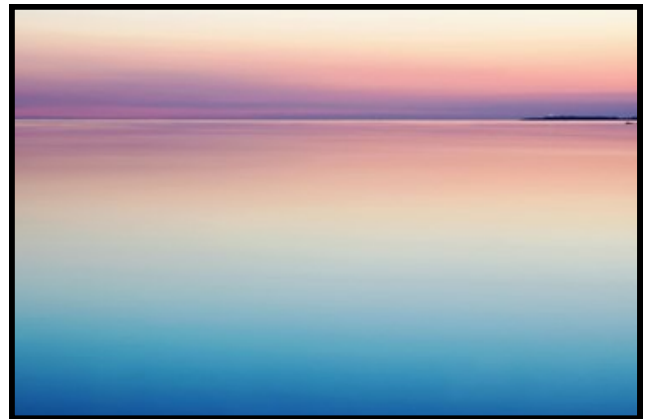
Pro tip: When heading out for some golden-hour adventuring, I highly recommend shooting in RAW. RAW files contain more data and provide greater flexibility for adjusting various aspects of your image during post-processing compared to JPEGs. This enables you to make adjustments without sacrificing image quality and recover detail as needed.

Remember, post-processing is an art form in itself, and there's no one-size-fits-all approach. Take the time to experiment, develop your own editing style, and stay true to your artistic vision.

#### **10. Keep shooting after sunset**

The evening golden hour is great for landscape photographers. However, the magic doesn't fade away as soon as the sun slips below the horizon. In fact, right after the golden hour concludes, a mesmerizing transformation takes place. The sky takes on a cool blue hue, and a serene, soft light creates a wonderfully ethereal atmosphere. This period is known as the blue hour, and it's another great time for landscape photography.

While the blue hour presents its own unique challenges, it offers an opportunity to capture a whole other type of landscape shot. The illumination is incredibly subtle and gentle, casting a tranquil mood over your scenes. To make the most of this exquisite hour, remember to bring along your trusty tripod. The dwindling light means a steady foundation is essential to avoid blurry shots.



Scouting becomes even more essential if you plan to shoot during this time. With the light fading, it's easy to overlook important details or miss potential subjects. Take your time to familiarize yourself with the location beforehand, so you can navigate it with ease and recognize key elements even after the sun has set.

### *10 Tips for Golden-Hour Landscape Photography . . . Continued*



So when the golden hour comes to a close in the evening, don't pack up your gear. Stay a little longer and immerse yourself in the captivating beauty of the blue hour. Capture the serene ambiance and let your photographs convey a sense of tranquility and enchantment!

#### **Golden-hour landscape photography: final words**

And there you have it! We've covered a whole bunch of golden-hour landscape photography tips that will take your skills to new heights, so make sure you commit them to memory and apply them during your next sunrise or sunset photoshoot.

Remember, this magical hour is fleeting, so don't waste a single moment. Rise early, chase sunsets, experiment with different settings, and don't be afraid to break the rules and try new techniques.

Also, don't pack up once the golden hour fades away! Keep shooting during the tranquil blue hour and watch as the world transforms into a mesmerizing realm of soft, ethereal light. You won't regret it!



*Rm*