

THROUGH THE LENS

Great People and Great Images Since 1988

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Year-End Competition Standings Announced at the June Meeting

Plaques were awarded to the ACC members with the highest standings in the competitions held during the 2015-2016 season. Color print, monochrome print and digital photo image winners are pictured at the June 1st meeting, below.



Small Color Prints -

Class AA – Bob Reynolds,

Class A – Jeff Berman

Class B – Jan Williams

Large Color Prints -

Class AA – Kathy Grady

Class A – Carol Arnolde

Class B – Bob Reynolds

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Small Monochrome Prints

Class AA – Ken Olsen

Class A – Jeff Berman

Class B – Bob Reynolds

Large Monochrome Prints

Class AA – Patrick Grady

Class A – Paula Matzek

Class B – Lance Lagoni



DPI – Color - Bob Reynolds

DPI – Monochrome - Ed Martin

Our congratulations go out to all of the top year-end standing plaque winners for the 2015-2016 season.

End of Year Competition Yields Winners as Judged by ACC Members

The End of Year competition consisted of prints and DPIs of club members that had won awards and honorable mention at the competitions held during the course of the 2015-2016 season. These photos were displayed for judging by the club members in attendance. The winning photographers are pictured below, followed by the winning photos.



Color Prints - Small

Bob Reynolds
Larry Arends
Richard Hassman



1st Place - On the Range - Rich Hassman



2nd Place - White Birch in the Fog - Larry Arends



3rd Place - Wyandot Falls -
Bob Reynolds



Color Prints - Large

Patrick Grady
Kathy Grady



1st (Tie) - Eagle Falls - Patrick Grady



1st (Tie) - Key Hole -
Kathy Grady



2nd Place - Sea Stacks - Patrick Grady



3rd Place - Ruby Beach - Patrick Grady



Monochrome Prints - Small

Ken Olsen
Bob Reynolds
Jeff Berman



1st Place - Reflections on Anna - Ken Olsen



2nd Place - Phil in a Fedora -
Jeff Berman

3rd Place (Tie) -
Stairway to Nowhere -
Jeff Berman



3rd Place (Tie) - Erie Falls -
Bob Reynolds



Monochrome Prints - Large

Patrick Grady



1st Place - Death Valley Dunes -
Patrick Grady



2nd Place - Bodie - Patrick Grady



3rd Place - Tioga Pass - Patrick Grady



DPI - Monochrome

Roy Lobenhofer
Ed Martin



1st Place - Jelly -
Roy Lobenhofer



2nd - We're Watching - Roy Lobenhofer



3rd Place -
Tree in Snow -
Ed Martin



DPI - Color

Jan Williams
Ken Olsen



1st Place - Got It! - Ken Olsen



2nd Place - Kestrel - Ken Olsen



3rd Place - Dragonfly - Jan Williams

How To Photograph Butterflies

Six simple techniques for photographing Butterflies

With written permission from Digital Photo Secrets

Recently I found myself anxious for the arrival of warm weather and craving a bit of outdoor photography. So what did I do? I headed indoors, of course. I found my local butterfly house and got a dose of outdoor photography in its warm and comfortable confines. There are dozens of butterfly houses to be found throughout the coldest parts of the country, and hundreds more public butterfly gardens in warmer regions—not to mention the countless natural occurrences of butterflies to be found in nature. No matter where you find these colorful little creatures, these tips will help you increase the odds of success on your next butterfly photography adventure.



1. First, let's look at the nuts and bolts of exposure. I find that a fairly high ISO in the 800 to 1000 range allows a very fast shutter speed and a medium aperture. The reason you don't want too wide an aperture is that you want to maximize the depth of field—which is inherently shallow when working closeup with small objects. The difference between $f/4$ and $f/8$ might be the difference between a specimen that's entirely in focus and one that only has part of one wing useably sharp. And to get a fast shutter speed at $f/8$, you may need to boost your ISO accordingly. I want a shutter speed of at least $1/500$ th, and preferably over $1/1000$ th. Adjust the ISO as necessary to achieve this, or consider using Auto ISO to allow your shutter speed and aperture to remain where you want them.

2. As for equipment, a macro lens is obviously immensely helpful. I couldn't have gotten some of the beautiful extreme close-ups that I made without my 100mm macro. (The fact that it has built-in image stabilization is also helpful for handholding, too.) While the macro is useful, it's not mandatory. Some of the nicest shots I made were with a plain old 24-70mm zoom. I even used this lens at the wide-angle end to help show context. You can still focus close and make nice compositions that incorporate the environment—especially if it includes colorful flowers or interesting foliage.



3. Don't waste your time trying to catch butterflies in flight. Let me rephrase that; I'm happy for you, if you want to attempt this, but don't expect this method to yield very many usable images. Butterflies are so fast, with very quick, fluttering changes of direction, that you end up shooting frame after frame of out-of-focus images. When you do happen to catch one in flight, I've found it's hard to tell they're flying—they look just like the do—alighted on a flower or perfectly at rest in midair. But remember: no risk, no reward. If you pick an optimal location and let your motor drive fly—and can muster a bit of good luck—you just might catch a beautiful in-flight shot that blows away the basic butterfly photos. My point is that the in-flight process can be very frustrating, so concentrate your energy on finding beautiful butterflies at rest in beautiful locations. This is challenging enough.

4. Look for edges of light. The transition areas from sun to shadow are great places to make photos, especially when you can get a subject lit against a background that's shaded. In the case of this subject, a brightly colored butterfly will simply glow when illuminated against a dark background. The nice thing about photographing butterflies

is you can do it in any light—soft and diffuse or direct specular sunlight. The key is to keep your shadow out of the shot, because in soft light it will make the exposure very low, and in hard light it will make for an unsightly shadow in the frame. Working on the edges of light will also allow you to try interesting scenarios such as backlighting and edge lighting to help make the photo really pop.



5. Target color. If you can't find the most colorful butterfly—or even when you do—look for colorful surroundings in which to shoot. That could be next to a bright yellow flower as the butterfly is feeding, or maybe perched on foliage that seems to glow with rich purples and reds. Butterfly photographs are so much about color, don't forget that you can find it in the background, too.

6. Speaking of composition, start by choosing a position where your sensor plane is close to parallel with the butterfly's wings. With open wings, that means you're likely shooting from directly above—rather than from the front or side. With closed wings, you'll choose a side-angle position. These angles not only help keep the entirety of the wings useably sharp, they help you approach the butterfly from its most photogenic angle. You also want to try to show all of the butterfly in your shot. I can't tell you how many times I've made a great image of a butterfly, but just barely missed

getting one wingtip in frame. It can ruin the entire composition! To be safe, you can shoot wider and crop in post. Of course, rules like these are perfect for breaking—like when composing from head-on. From this position you're likely not going to show the entire butterfly in your photo and you're probably not going to see much of the wings. But, what you'll have is an interesting frontal view of an interesting little creature. And, as with anything, looking it in the eyes is inherently interesting.

A FAREWELL AND THANKS TO ALBERT TEITSMA

As you may know Albert Teitsma has returned to his native Canada.

Albert worked with me as publisher of Through The Lens newsletter for 2 years and I want to take this time to thank him for a job well done in publishing the newsletter.

It's not an easy task editing and publishing the newsletter. It's a time consuming volunteer job and, mostly, a challenge laying out each page of the newsletter. Although Albert & I periodically had our differences in what should - and shouldn't - be included in any particular issue, it all worked out enough to earn us a #2 national rating in camera club newsletters.

Thanks Albert. And wishing you well.

Jeff Berman



The Answer Man

Today's Question

Is it more difficult for autofocus systems to grab focus at wider (lower numerical) f-stops? Specifically, does the camera spend more time hunting at f/4 than at f/11 due to factors such as narrower depth of field?

Answer:

Actually, you could say that the opposite is true. There are actually two considerations here. First, under normal circumstances your aperture setting on the camera doesn't impact autofocus, because the camera essentially ignores your aperture setting when it is establishing autofocus. However, the maximum aperture size for a given lens does impact autofocus, with a larger aperture size (smaller f-number) providing an advantage.



(The camera is actually made of cake and frosting.)

How to Capture Photos in Foggy or Misty Conditions

Printed with written permission from Digital Photo Secrets



Fog is eerily beautiful, potentially dangerous and can transform almost any setting into something either ominous, or quiet, moody and introspective. It's also notoriously difficult to photograph. Have you ever tried? This is one of those situations where you feel certain your photos are just going to take themselves. The landscape is bathed in this amazing gray mist, there's beauty everywhere, but for some reason your photos fail to recreate what your eyes see. Why?

The answer, as it so often and redundantly is in photography, is light.

You may have heard cloudy-day lighting situations referred to as “nature’s softbox.” The same is true for foggy conditions, except that you are literally inside the clouds, which amplifies that softbox effect. Where photos taken on cloudy days can sometimes seem flat, photos taken on foggy days are even more so. There may be no shadows at all on a foggy day, and [color saturation](#) may be particularly weak. This is no reason to avoid shooting in the fog, though. These are just foggy day quirks that you need to understand and work with.

Foggy Day Idiosyncrasies

First let's talk a little bit about what happens to light on a foggy day. Understanding this is really a matter of understanding how a softbox works. On a foggy day, the air is full of water particles that redirect light rays. When there are a lot of water particles in the air, they randomly scatter those light rays rather than allowing them to travel on a direct course from light source to subject. These water particles do the same thing that a softbox does, only on a much larger scale. The result is heavily diffused light, which can be good. Or bad, depending on your perspective.



Morning Fog by Flickr user AR Nature Gal

Another feature of fog is that there is less light overall, which means **longer exposure times**. But not too long, because fog is often in motion and shooting it with exposures greater than, say, one second, can result in blurry fog. Experiment and make sure you have a tripod with you. Shoot some images with your tripod, and for others **turn up your ISO** and shoot handheld. A range of different shots will give you the best chance at good results.

Although it seems counter-intuitive, fog is actually reflective, which can fool your camera's meter into thinking that there's more light than there actually is (all built-in camera meters measure reflected light rather than ambient light), resulting in underexposed images. You will probably need to add **exposure compensation** to your foggy day photos—anywhere from +1 to +2.



Foggy conditions may muck with your autofocus

...so be prepared to switch to manual focus.

Shooting in RAW has advantages in many different types of photography, and fog is no exception. Foggy days may do odd things to your **white balance**, so it's nice to have the option to fix this later in post processing. If you don't want to shoot in RAW, use your "overcast" white balance setting for the best results. If you do find yourself adjusting white balance in post-processing, try adding a slight blue cast to your images and see if you like the results. A blue cast can enhance that foggy day mood.

Composition

Keeping those little idiosyncrasies in mind, let's talk about composition. Now you've heard me say many times that **including something in the foreground** of a landscape image can help create depth and dimension in the final image. This is doubly true for photographs shot on foggy days, because the poor contrast created by foggy conditions can make images seem flat and dimensionless. This quality increases with distance; closer objects maintain more color and contrast while color and contrast drops off rapidly the further away you get from an object. To create a feeling of depth in your foggy day images and to make sure those images have adequate contrast and color saturation, try to include something close to the camera.

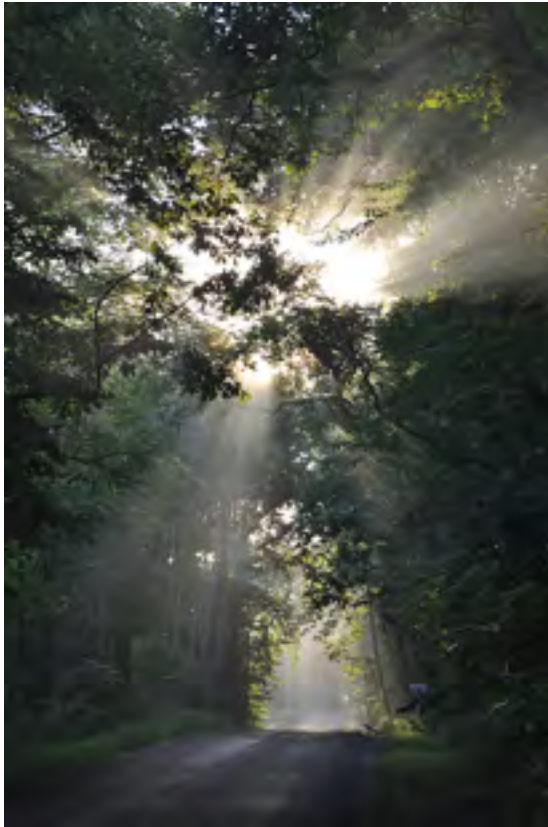


Remember that fog creates a classic mood, which is not something you can easily change. It's far better to work within its limitations and create images that exemplify the natural moody, quiet and surreal feeling that fog gives to a landscape. You can accentuate this quality by turning your subjects into silhouettes rather than trying to recreate detail where it may not really be necessary to have detail. Often the fog itself is your subject, and everything else plays just a supporting role. Try shooting each one of your foggy day images twice and compare to see which one best captures the mood of your scene. First, expose for the dominant object in your scene; second, [expose for the fog itself](#). In the first image, you'll capture the object while losing some of the fog's natural qualities; in the second image you'll get more detail and texture in the fog, while losing detail in that dominant object.

Light rays

Everyone loves that shot of light rays shining down on a footpath or illuminating a lonely object in a forest. Shooting in foggy conditions can be a great way to capture that coveted shot, because the scattering effect of the fog will often create beams of light if there is a concentrated light source in the scene. This could be natural light or it could be manmade light—your job as a foggy-day photographer is to seek out those defined light rays and capture them on camera before the fog gives way to sunshine.

As a general rule, the closer you are to the light source the more pronounced those light rays will be, as long as the light source itself remains at an angle to your camera.



Foggy days are a golden opportunity for any photographer, so don't pass them up. Just remember that foggy days aren't always friendly, and they're going to try to trick you. Bring a lens cloth in case of condensation, and make sure that you know those foggy day idiosyncrasies inside and out. If you know ahead of time what challenges the conditions are going to throw at you, you'll be able to use them to your advantage and come home with a set of beautiful, moody photos you can be proud of.



SHOUT-OUT !

Letters to the Editor



We welcome your cards, letters and emails with comments about the newsletter. Good or bad comments are welcome. Wait. Not exactly true. Keep the bad comments to a minimum or make them sound like constructive criticism.

Tell us if you would like to see specific tutorials or special articles. If you are a newbie tell us what you need to know.

From JoAnne Barsanti:

The newsletter is awesome. One thing I noted is that there were a couple of pages where a couple of lines disappeared from the bottom of the page. I think it happened on the left hand column. There was another instance where a couple of lines from the bottom of the left hand column was repeated at the top of the right hand column.

Thanks JoAnne. Great observation. And loved your highlighted first sentence.

CACCA Prints Scores from the May Competition

Small Monochrome

Ready for Flight	Bob Reynolds	22
Caress	Randy Vlcek	21
Capitol Reef	Carol Arnolde	20
Reflections on Anna	Ken Olsen	24 Award

Large Monochrome

View from Above	Nancy St. Clair	22
Death Valley Dunes	Patrick Grady	21
Moving Up	Lance Lagoni	21
Cloud Bolt	Paula Matzek	21

Small Color -

Pink Dahlia	Carol Arnolde	20
Comin' at You	Bob Reynolds	22
White Birch in the Fog	Larry Arends	22
Spring Time	Kathy Grady	22

Large Color -

Ford's Point	Mike Garber	21
Shy Guy	Bob Reynolds	24 Award
Canyon Overlook	Randy Vlcek	21
Sea Stacks	Patrick Grady	23 HM

CACCA DPI Scores from the May Competition

Churchill's Log Cabin	Roy Lobenhofer	21
Sierra	John Chwalek	22
Norwegian Valley	Bill Bible	23
Gentle Beauty	Patty Colabuono	23

Photography Ideas for this Summer From Illinois - State of Hidden Wonders

Compiled by Walt & Carol Anderson, Morton Arboretum

Name	Location	Nearest Town	Phone	Highlights of the area/Important Info.
Anderson Lake Conservation Area	Astoria		309/759-4484	Lake, marshes, woodland, fields
Apple River Canyon State Park	Apple River		815/745-3302	Bluffs, hardwood forest, river
Baker's Lake	Hillside Ave.	Barrington	847/771-1335	Rookery, savanna, marsh, prairie
Banner Marsh State Fish & Wildlife	Canton		309/647-9184	Freshwater marsh
Beall Woods State Park	Beall Woods Ave.	Mt. Carmel	618/298-2442	Old-growth deciduous forest
Bell Smith Springs Recreation Area	Harrisburg		618/658-2111	Cliffs, rock formations, streams, forest
Bluff Spring Fen Nature Preserve	Elgin		312/346-8166	Fen, kames, prairie, savanna
Cache River State Natural Area	Vienna		618/634-9678	Cypress swamps, sloughs
Camp Sagawau	111 th Street	Lemont	630/257-2045	Canyon, savanna, prairie
Cuba Marsh	Cuba Road	Lake Zurich	847/367-6640	Lake, marsh, savanna, prairie
Ferne Clyffe State Park	Route 37	Goreville	618/995-2411	Bluffs, streams, falls, lake
Garden of the Gods	Karber's Ridge Rd.	Elizabethtown	618/287-2201	Bluffs, rock formations, forest
Gensburg-Markham Prairie	Markham			Prairie
Glacial Park	Harts Road	Ringtown	815/678-4431	Kames, bog, marsh, prairie, savanna
Goose Lake Prairie State Natural area	Morris		815/942-2899	Tallgrass prairie, marsh
Horseshoe Lake Conservation Area			618/776-5689	Oxbow lake, swamp, bottomlands
Illinois Beach State Park	Zion		847/662-4891	Beach ridge, swales, marsh, prairie, savanna
LaRue Swamp and pine Hills	Jonesboro		618/833-8576	Swamps, bluffs, bottom woodlands
Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center			708/839-6897	Sloughs, savanna, prairie, forest
Matthiessen State Park	Route 178	Utica	815/667-4868	Deep dells, falls, forest
Mermet Lake Conservation Area	Vienna		618/524-5577	Lake, prairie, cypress swamp
Messenger Woods	Bruce Road	Lockport		Old-grove forest, spring wildflowers
Middlefork Savanna	Route 43	Lake Forest		Savanna
Mississippi Palisades State Park	Savanna		815/273-2731	Bluffs, hardwood forest, Mississippi River
Moraine Hills State Park	McHenry		815/385-1624	Lake, bog, fen, marsh, forest
Nachusa Grasslands	Lowden Road	Franklin Grove	815/456-2340	Prairie, savanna, fen, sedge meadow, marsh
Pere Marquette State Park	Grafton		618/786-3323	Bluffs, forest, Illinois River valley
Ryerson Conservation Area	Deerfield		847/367-6640	Hardwood forest, river bottom habitat
Sanganois State Fish & Wildlife Area	Chandlerville		309/546-2628	Streams, ponds, sloughs, marshes
Shoe Factory Rd. Prairie Nature Presv.			708/771-1330	Prairie, kame
Starved Rock State Park	Routes 178 & 71	Utica	815/667-4726	Steep cliffs, falls, forest, prairie
Volo Bog State Natural Area	Ingleside		815/344-1294	Bog, woods, wetland, prairie
Zanders Woods	Thornton-Lansing Rd.	Lansing		Ferns, woodlands, marshes, sedge meadow

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