



Nature Photography Workshop

Tailored to the needs of your group, this workshop is typically presented as three sessions of four hours but may be extended for increased field experience or in-depth coverage of a topic. Contact us for options and pricing.

Course Content

Nature photography encompasses a wide range of venues, subjects and purposes. This workshop mixes instruction with practical field experience, introducing aspects of nature photography including composition, exposure, focusing, lighting, camera operation and field techniques. Examples of topics covered include: nature photography venues and examples, composition techniques, tools for composition, natural and modified lighting, controlling exposure, focusing methods, depth of field, camera equipment and operation, polarizing filter use, field equipment, practical tips for the field, and projects for the beginner. Throughout, application of these techniques to nature photography is highlighted. Field exercises augment the classroom instruction and permit the students to practice the techniques they have learned.

Normally, the last meeting of this workshop is dedicated to post processing and printing, however, based on the interests and ability level of the group, another advanced topic may be introduced. Possibilities include computer controlled camera operation, stereo photography and time-lapse techniques. In the printing session, for example, student work is treated individually to introduce touch-up, color adjustment, cropping, sharpening and other digital techniques. Typically, students receive an 8" x 10" print suitable for framing.

Prerequisites

The workshop is intended for beginner to intermediate photographers. Students should bring a camera (digital strongly preferred) and be able to operate it in point and shoot mode. (Bring enough memory or film and batteries! Plan on 1 – 2 hours of fieldwork each session, depending on the weather.) Students may bring their own laptops for downloading and viewing their photographs. To facilitate review and class discussion of student work, students should be prepared to “hand in” a few images of their choice. This would be best accomplished via downloading and email at home or by creation of a CD or DVD at home. Students using film or without electronic means may bring prints. Although camera operation will be discussed at a generic level, students should also have access to their own camera manuals. (Electronic versions of camera manuals are often available at the manufacturer’s web site.)

Instructor David Saxe

David Saxe is a systems architect, pilot and photographer with a strong background in scientific programming and systems design. Mr. Saxe has worked with digital images and techniques since the early 1970s. Working for fifteen years at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, NJ, he created software for analysis, reduction and graphical presentation of astrophysics images, including data from Hubble Space Telescope. In 2002, he formed USA Aloft, LLC, a New Hampshire based software and aerial photography company, specifically to digitally photograph the Lewis and Clark Trail. Teaching a variety of technical subjects throughout his career, he began teaching nature photography in 2007. In addition to this basic workshop, USA Aloft offers advanced photography instruction for night photography, post processing and printing, depth of field, field exercises, computer control of camera systems, time lapse photography and stereo photography.