

PRESS RELEASE

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[High resolution photos available upon request.]

Lewis and Clark Exhibit Opens July 9

"Discovering America's Natural History, The Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition", an exhibit by nature photographer, David Saxe, opens at the Prescott Farm Audubon Center in Laconia, NH.

Auburn, NH – In 1804, in one of the first big science efforts undertaken by this new nation, Lewis and Clark set out to explore the Missouri and Columbia Rivers. Traversing some of the most rugged and beautiful terrain in North America, the expedition observed and recorded the natural history, surveyed the terrain, and made contact with the many Native American peoples along their route. In the current exhibit on display at the Prescott Farm Audubon Center in Laconia, NH, through August 31, 2007, photographer David Saxe tells the expedition's story with aerial and ground based images from the present day Lewis and Clark Trail. Images sample the terrain, flora and fauna along the route from St Louis, Missouri to Astoria, Oregon.

The exhibit, consisting of nearly 60 images and a printed guide, is arranged in three sections. The first section provides some background for the expedition, the route taken, and the boats used on the Missouri River system. In the bulk of the exhibit, the second section contains images from along the trail, showing the river and terrain along the route and replicas of the expedition's winter dwellings. In many cases, an aerial shot is matched with a ground-based image taken from the same spot. The final section contains images of plant and animal life along the trail. Using the printed guide, visitors may read about each image and determine its location on a trail map that provides further historical information.

The exhibit was recently on display at the Massabesic Audubon Center in Auburn, NH where it was well received. Mr. Saxe comments, "So many people who saw the show here in Auburn were enthusiastic. Of course, everyone loved the photographs, but even better, they enjoyed learning about the Lewis and Clark story. I don't know how many times I heard from parents that their children had recently studied the expedition. Based on the response, I felt I needed to take the show on the road to provide an opportunity to a wider audience. In the heart of New Hampshire vacation territory, Prescott Farm is an ideal venue for the summer."

Since 2001, photographer David Saxe has crossed the country multiple times documenting the Lewis and Clark Trail both from the air and from the ground. In a talk and reception scheduled for July 26, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Mr. Saxe will present more pictures and discuss his own adventures recording the trail. Pictures of more birds, other wildlife, flowers and plants, interior shots of reconstructed winter quarters, a real Indian canoe and additional ground and aerial shots along the trail will supplement a brief talk. Topics will include how Mr. Saxe became interested in this compelling story of American history, foods eaten by the expedition, and how to plan traveling the Trail yourself.

About David Saxe and USA Aloft

David Saxe is a systems architect, pilot and photographer with a strong background in scientific programming and systems design. 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. Mr. Saxe formed USA Aloft, a New Hampshire based software and photography company whose initial project was to document the Lewis and Clark Trail. When he is not working on the Lewis and Clark project, he records nature, adding to one of his fine art portfolios.

The goal of USA Aloft's Lewis and Clark Project is to document the trail in its present day condition with images and other material for use in the classroom, by the enthusiast or for serious research. Mr. Saxe began by photographing the trail from the air in detail using twin-mounted cameras to provide stereo views of the topography. The initial hope was to fly the route several times so that each region might be seen during the approximate season of Lewis and Clark's traversal. While the data collected is not survey-grade, the position and orientation of each image is known with an error on the order of tens of meters or less. This makes the database an ideal companion to cartographic works describing the route. A reconstruction of the survey points taken by Lewis and Clark was used as a guide for much of the flight path. During the summer and fall of 2002, Mr. Saxe designed and constructed a camera system for taking aerial stereo views along a GPS assisted route. In October, during an initial attempt to collect images along the Lewis and Clark route, weather closed in and limited collection to areas of Missouri. During the summer of 2003, flights were made to collect forward-looking stereo images over almost the entire westbound route. The return flight collected side looking views over the same route. Some initial ground based photography was done along the Columbia River, from the Gorge out to Astoria, including Fort Clatsop. The winter was spent performing initial processing to build a database that describes each image's position in space and time. During the summer of 2004, a ground based photographic trip collected images from along the entire trail. Starting in late June and traveling for nearly two months, Mr. Saxe added more images. With further pictures from along the Ohio River and earlier trips to the northwest, the collection now numbers nearly 60,000 images. For further information about David Saxe and USA Aloft, visit www.usaaloft.com.

Discovering America's Natural History
The Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition
Exhibit by David Saxe, USA Aloft, LLC
Open July 9 – August 31, 2007
Talk and Artist Reception July 26, 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
At the Prescott Farm Audubon Center
928 White Oaks Road, Laconia, N.H.

For directions, visit www.nhauudubon.org/sanctuaries/prescott.htm.

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