

# SVNP NEWSLETTER, AUGUST, 2023

INCLUDING MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 10 MEETING

There are currently opportunities to give presentations starting as soon as October, 2023. As usual, any suggestions you may have for programs - especially of a how-to nature - would be appreciated. Please email (wah@waynehallphotography.com) or call (978-443-9226) Wayne if you are willing to give a presentation yourself or if you know someone to recommend.

## **Evening Presentation - Creative Editing for Wildlife Photography**

For her second act, **Nicole Mordecai** has embraced photography and, especially, photographic instruction. She was able to bring to her new photographic endeavor a facility with graphics editing software which she had developed in her previous professional life. Nicole immediately addressed the conflict in the title between creative editing and the strict style of *reportage* expected of wildlife photos submitted to competitions by observing that, given proper disclosure, one enjoys much wider permissions about making one's own *art*.

Nicole's examples started with three images of sea lions spanning as many approaches: strictly representational, representational but with evocative lighting (layering a marked graphic effect on the displayed interaction) and a creative crop into the skin folds on a single individual that removes the chosen image from its context and leaves the viewer in doubt as to its source - in other words, an abstract. With the next examples, Nicole began to get into the nuts and bolts of how she pursues the results she desires in Adobe Lightroom. A flamingo photographed at a butterfly enclosure in Victoria, B.C. was followed by a group consisting of two snakes and a lizard photographed at Hunt Photo in Melrose, MA. In both instances the background was reduced to nearly black using the recently added masking abilities to be found in Lightroom. For the reptiles, Nicole demonstrated her process to take the image from the original to the result, showing and explaining the necessary manipulations. Likewise with the next photo, that of a fox kit in Wellfleet.

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Nicole opened up the next image (of a busking swan) to audience participation. Folks eagerly weighed in. Not surprisingly, the previous images seem to have whetted the appetite of the company to subject the image to a similar treatment as the previous examples, but Nicole's own approach maintained much of the context. In the next image, of a less exercised swan, the treatment was less about *pop* and more about *dreamy*.

An image of a Black-crowned Night Heron with a fish taken at the Winchester, MA fish ladder gave Nicole a chance to discuss the opportunities afforded (in Lightroom) to experiment and directly assess results from divergent settings by comparing virtual copies with each other.

Nicole used the final image (a cardinal going wild in a bird bath) for a demonstration of the abilities of Photoshop's Generative AI (available in the current beta) to riff off a subject and construct a different, presumably much more effective and sympathetic context.

The major takeaway of the evening is that not only can photography be a form of strict reportage but that there is also an opposite artistic space in photography that is served by creative editing, even for wildlife. This could include both minor manipulations that add a little bit of punch here and there, as well as major efforts aimed both at promoting the subject and severely deemphasizing the background. There are other strategies, as well.

A corollary is that a more creative approach can be more forgiving of images made in inopportune circumstances. Getting it right in-camera is an ideal not always easy to attain. The evening made a convincing argument for the desirability of developing post-processing chops sufficient to pull off transformations of the sort that were demonstrated. Nicole's logical organization and relaxed delivery easily maintained her audience's engagement with a practice which many photographers resist. Perhaps they needn't.

## Member Images

**Hendrik Broekman** showed images taken during an early evening photo walk at Heard Farm in Wayland.

**Barbara Peskin** offered recently made images, including two of cedar waxwings, an oriole and two of a goldfinch on a sunflower. The goldfinch sequence was interesting for Barbara's observation that the bird was engaged in tearing off the flower's corolla, something that she obligingly accomplished in the bird's absence. Sure enough, when the bird returned, he was able to go directly to the edge and harvest seeds.

**Stephen Gabeler** showed seven nature photographs made on a recently concluded trip to Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia. These started with a placid brook leading into Warren Lake (Ingonish). Gabe discussed his affinity for the 4:3 aspect ratio while demonstrating the crop he had applied. This was followed by views of Beulach Ban falls, a moss wall found at McIntosh Brook on the Cabot Trail, a found beach assortment at Isle Madame, finally ending at the Hopewell Rocks in New Brunswick. This previous image, which features a rock that could be seen as a head, led nicely into the last two, each an exercise in pareidolia. In the first, there was a face to be discerned in the bark of a tree and, in the second, a rock sporting an inclusion that mimicked the shape of a tree needing little help from the imagination.

**Phyllis Neufeld** displayed a set of impressive bird photos made with her Panasonic G9. These included a house finch on a post, as well as several ruby-throated hummingbirds in flight (a male, a female, a standoff between a male and a bald-faced hornet, and finally a male hummer with its tongue partially deployed.)

**Susanna Kamon** showed two four-frame sequences taken from videos made with her trail cameras. The first sequence, taken at night and photographed by the illumination of the infrared lamp, was of a coyote playing with a deer scrap by flinging it up and allowing it to land on its back. The second sequence was of a deer falling asleep.

Neither of these sequences featured the sort of behavior in which a wild animal would engage while humans were present.

### Member News

**Sherry Fendell** writes, "One of my photographs was accepted into the Lexington Arts and Crafts Society annual show. The opening reception for the show (entitled "Flair!") will take place on Sunday, September 10, between 2-5. The gallery's location is 130 Waltham Street, Lexington, MA..

"The show runs through October 1st. Gallery hours are 11am to 5pm, Tuesday-Sunday. I hope that you all can see the show."

### Around the Web

Speaking of wildlife photography, I ran across an interesting excerpt of a larger program given by local photographers Shawn Carey and Michael Milicia. This video deals specifically with the virtues of photographing birds small in the frame.

<https://youtu.be/K0c4Ni4KbeQ?si=cGU8nOiP4TkPRIOB>

Also, speaking of getting it right in-camera, I was delighted to click on this appreciation of the work of Ernst Haas. Superb photography, shot predominantly on Kodachrome.

<https://youtu.be/fqypq8rNSDs?si=LaZeKGwqyFLcXHV>

Apropos of several of our recent programs concerning countries in the North Atlantic, this Icelandic confection by the talented Danish photographer Mads Peter Iversen offers some stunning imagery, both still and video, in a more current style. Not only are there landscapes galore to be had, but puffins as well. It's worth watching but you will have to forgive his (thankfully) short bouts of self promotion.

<https://youtu.be/DDGtrXk7g7U?si=6AjAmKJb6LB8ZrN3>

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### Upcoming SVNP Programs

September 14	Jean Fain	<i>Newfoundland: A Wildlife and Landscape Photography Wonderland</i>
October 12		TBA

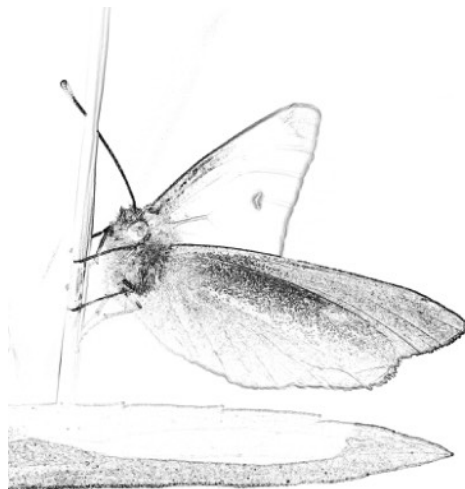
Please Note - All meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month, at 7:00 pm, either via Zoom or at our location (or both):

Great Room, Newbury Court  
100 Newbury Court, Concord, MA

The decision to hold in-person meetings will be made on a month-to-month basis and communicated approximately a week before the meeting.

Updated directions to the Great Room and instructions for underground parking (to be available starting at 6:10pm on meeting evenings) may be found at the link immediately below.

<http://svnp.homestead.com/files/Directions to Newbury Court Great Room.pdf>



<http://svnp.homestead.com>

# SVNP EXHIBIT CALENDAR

## Group Exhibits

November, 2023      Goodnow Library, 21 Concord Road, Sudbury,  
MA

## Individual Member Exhibits

SVNP members - please notify Wayne Hall ([wah@waynehallphotography.com](mailto:wah@waynehallphotography.com)) of your upcoming individual exhibits for posting on the SVNP website.

Date	Member	Exhibit Location
Ongoing	Marijke Holtrop	Online Exhibit on the website of the Friends of the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge ( <a href="http://farnwr.org/gallery.html">http://farnwr.org/gallery.html</a> )
October	Barbara Peskin	Exhibit at the Lincoln Public Library, 3 Bedford Rd. Lincoln, MA

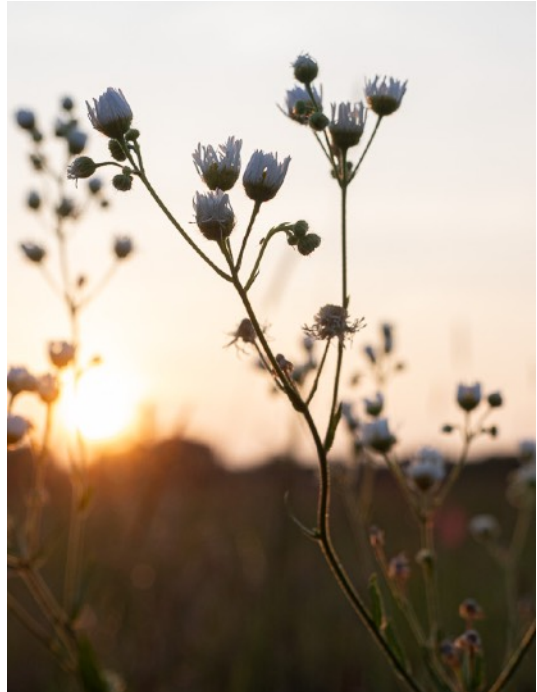


### An Invitation from your Editor

If having a meatier monthly read is of interest to you then, please, I invite you to send anything you may wish to contribute to future newsletters (a précis of an upcoming presentation, photos, personal news, reviews, neat tricks you find worth sharing, etc.) to me at [henkbroekman@gmail.com](mailto:henkbroekman@gmail.com). Please include SVNP in the subject line.

I especially invite presenters and members sharing images to select and submit files for illustrative purposes. I expect it would be possible to accommodate two images or so for main presenters and one each for after-presentation sharing. Generally, expect to see half-column layout along the lines of this example. If you have photos you may wish to share, please submit jpg files sized no smaller than 1200 px on the long side. Submission deadline will be 11:59 pm on the Monday following the meeting. Inclusion in any particular newsletter will be at my discretion based on newsletter length, distribution file weight, current workload, etc.

*Hendrik Broekman*



*July Sunset;  
photo, Hendrik Broekman*