



SVNP NEWS



The Newsletter of the
Sudbury Valley Nature Photographers

Volume 9, Number 1

January 2007

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 8th, at Traditions Senior Living Facility, 6 Green Way, off Rt. 126/27 one mile south of route 20 in Wayland, MA. Look for the darkened driveway, Green Way, directly across from Saint Ann's Church building.

Program for February 8th meeting: **Wildlife of India**

A presentation by Amitava Gangulee

Please bring five minutes worth of prints, slides, or digital images for member viewing. (See note from Betsy Moyer, below.) Here's an opportunity if you wish to have feedback from other members who especially value capturing the world of photography as they see it.

Come at 6:30 P.M. for refreshments and viewing the club's ongoing exhibit at Traditions. Anyone able to bring prints for hanging, please contact Wayne Hall (978-443-9226) or Betsy Moyer (508-358-2939), or simply bring them to the meeting.

Schedule of Upcoming SVNP Programs

February, 2007	Amitava Gangulee	Wildlife of India
March, 2007	Betsy Moyer	Flowers of Cornwall

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Recap of January 11th Meeting

- Betty Ann Tyson gave a presentation on her trip to Switzerland and Burgundy.
- Sue Abrahamsen gave a presentation on macro photography techniques. (See Sue's notes below.)
- Thanks to photographers whose images and prints were shown, including Betsy Moyer, Charlie Lowell, John Varnerin and Chris Rowan.

- For those wanting to present digital images at SVNPN meetings, please e-mail Don Sherman (dssdmd@comcast.net) for instructions on how to prepare images for a slide show. Apparently, if you have more than 9 images, there will be problems without Don's fixit program.
- Welcome to new member: Jed Winer
- Note from Betsy Moyer:
Those present approved the new format for the member-viewing portion of our meetings. We decided to allot each member 5 minutes maximum to show whatever she or he wants to -- spool through or discuss only one image or each of several in considerable depth. The amount of time could be adjusted, depending upon the number of participants attending the meeting. The time limit idea works well for Metro West Camera Club, and it might be a better format for us.

All Photographers Welcome at Photoshoppers Meetings

A group of SVNPN photographers who are interested in and/or proficient in using the Photoshop software meet in the Raytheon Room at the Wayland Public Library each month to review members' images, discuss ways of improving images, or correcting mistakes. Any photographer is welcome to come, whether you are just starting out using Photoshop, or are an expert. Photographers are encouraged to bring a CD with images that they would like help with. The meetings start at 7 pm and end at 8:45 pm.

Meeting dates are on the following Thursdays:

- January 18
- February 15
- March 15
- April 19
- May 17
- June 21

SVNPN Exhibit Calendar

Individual Member Exhibits

SVNPN members - please notify Wayne Hall (wah@waynehallphotography.com) of your upcoming individual exhibits for posting on the SVNPN website.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Exhibit Location</u>
Dec. 30 – March 1	Sherry Fendell	The Center for the Arts in Natick, 14 Summer Street “Nature Impressions”

Jan. 1-31	Betsy Moyer	Raytheon Room, Wayland Public Library "Wildflowers of the Northeast"
Jan. 1-31	Charlie Lowell	Emerson Hospital, Concord, MA

SVNP Group Exhibits

<u>Date</u>	<u>Exhibit Location</u>
Ongoing	Traditions, 6 Green Way, Wayland, MA: joint rotating exhibit* with Arts/Wayland. For information about hanging a print call Wayne Hall (978-443-9226) or Betsy Moyer (508-358-2939)
Nov. 14 – Jan. 31 **EXTENDED**	Gallery at the Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA - "The Drama of Light"
Mar. and Apr., 2007	West Newton Cinema, Newton, MA

** Current SVNP exhibitors at Traditions are: Sue Abrahamsen, George Brawerman, Linda Crews, Murray Drobnis, Jackie Greene, Wayne Hall, Martha Kilcoyne, Russell Kirby, Stanley Klein, Walter Krawczyk, Erin Lamb, Dotsy Long, Susan Majors, Betsy Moyer, John Seiler, and Henry Weisenburger.*

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Items of Interest

CALL FOR EXHIBITORS - WEST NEWTON CINEMA EXHIBIT
 The Sudbury Valley Nature Photographers' next group exhibit will be at the West Newton Cinema on Washington Street (Route 16) in West Newton Center from March 1 through April 30. This will be our second exhibit here, the previous one having been in 2000. This will be a fairly large show, although we are not completely sure yet if we will have all of the exhibit space that we used in our first exhibit. All nature photography is welcome; however as much as possible we would like images that fit with a theme of "Signs of Spring". We will use that title (or something similar) in the publicity and may perhaps allocate the best contiguous exhibit space to prints that reflect that subject matter. If you would like to participate, please respond to Wayne Hall (wah@waynehallphotography.com or 978-443-9226) NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, JANUARY 26. As usual, the number of prints per exhibitor will depend upon how many members respond and how much exhibit space we will actually be able to use. If we have more potential exhibitors than the space will accommodate, first priority will be given to

first-time exhibitors, followed by a random selection from the remaining interested members.

IMPORTANT!!! Given the probable size of this show and the fact that both Betsy and Wayne are going to be rather busy around March 1, we need some significant help from our exhibitors or other members of SVNP as follows:

1. Someone to organize a reception (planned for Sunday, March 4, in the afternoon)
2. People to help with the hanging (Thursday morning, March 1). Hanging in this venue is considerably more complicated than in most of our other locations. Take-down date is Monday, April 30, in the morning.
3. Someone who can commit to stopping by the theater on roughly a weekly basis to check on things (all prints still on the wall, adequate supply of handouts available, etc.)

This is a very good venue, and the theater tends to draw audiences that appreciate art. PLEASE REMEMBER TO RESPOND TO WAYNE BY JANUARY 26 IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THE SHOW!

These notes were provided by Sue Abrahamsen referencing her program on macro photography techniques.

CLOSE UP PHOTOGRAPHY January 2007

Equipment:

Camera with Depth of Field Preview.

The depth of field preview button will let you see exactly what is in and out of focus at different apertures (f stops). F 4 will give you a very shallow depth of field, f 16-32 will give you a greater depth of field meaning more will be in focus. The longer the lens, (or the greater magnification of the subject,) the less depth of field you have. It is important to experiment with different f stops to determine just how much background you want to be focused. Usually it's desirable to keep backgrounds somewhat out of focus as to not distract from the subject.

Mirror Lock up. & Cable release: This will prevent camera shake.

Manual Focus: When very close to your subject using manual focus will allow you to fine tune exactly what you want in focus: insect eyes, or stamen and pistils of flowers.

Tripod: for stability. A tripod that will go very low to the ground is desirable, but bean bags are another possibility although not as flexible as a tripod.

Another useful tool is the Plamp, (or clothes pin and pipe cleaner) to keep flowers from blowing in wind.

Lenses: 50 or **100** or 200 Macro lens. The 50 requires you to get very close to your subject. 200 is big and heavy. 100mm seems best to me, and you'll actually have about a 140mm when used on a dig. camera.

Zoom lenses: I like using my 75-300 IS lens. Because of its length it will tend to give you more blurred backgrounds. When I travel I leave the macro lens at home to save weight. I'll use my 500D close- up diopter on this lens for some reasonably successful close ups.

Wide angle Lens plus a 12mm extension tube can give you some interesting images. You will be very close with the subject almost touching the lens. This also gives you a greater depth of field.

Extension Tubes These are spacers that go between the camera body and the lens. Since they have no glass the image quality isn't affected. The longer the tube the greater the magnification. The only disadvantage is a loss of light. But with today's dig. cameras we can up the ISO to compensate.

Tele-converters, (also called tele- extenders) They come in 1.4x or 2x.

These are also placed between the camera body and the lens. They contain glass and extend the magnification by 1.4 or 2 times the lens length.

LIGHTING

I found **reflectors** to be my most useful tool in flower photography. They are used to boost available light, to throw light down into flowers and to reduce harsh shadows. Determine where the light is coming from, let it bounce off the reflector onto, or into the subject. As you move the reflector it is easy to see how the light effects the subject. Placing a white foam core board under a flower can add just enough light to brighten the dark underside of the flower. Reflectors can be white, gold, or silver Photoflex spring discs, or a white board or crumpled aluminum foil. Silver or foil can be too harsh, and gold can be too warm, I prefer to use white in most cases. Be careful to not cancel out detail by over-lighting. Side light is usually most pleasing.

Diffusers: It is desirable to photograph on overcast days, but if you are out on a bright contrast day, use a diffuser to soften the light.

Your camera should be on a tripod so that your hands are free to work with the reflectors and diffusers.

FLASH: I've tried bouncing the flash off of the reflector for added light. You'll need an off camera cord to do this. Using flash for photographing moving subjects can be useful. Chasing bugs and butterflies while the camera is on a tripod is difficult. I prefer to hand hold and use flash to freeze the motion.

Indoor photography eliminates the problem of wind and can give you more control. You can add a desired background such as the Varitone graduated backgrounds from Superior Specialties Inc 31x43. I also like using a 75 W Varilux, natural spectrum light bulb in a Home Depot reflector bowl.. With Dig. and the ability to change the cameras white balance you could probably use any light source.

TECHNIQUES

Backgrounds --Use DOF preview, choose proper lens and desired f stop. Isolate your subject on an uncluttered background.

Because the DOF is so small in close up photography, it's best to have the camera back **parallel** to subject for better focus.

If your subject has **eyes**, be sure the eyes are in focus. In the case of flowers the **stamen and pistils** should be sharp. It is important to use manual focus for extreme macro. Avoid using the macro setting (tulip symbol) on your camera if you have a choice. You'll have more control, and achieve better results using the manual adjustments if your camera has them.

When photographing **insects**, you'll notice many return over and over to the same spot. You can set up your tripod and camera focusing on that spot and just wait patiently. Dragon flies are very cooperative in this way.

For **mushrooms** and low plants, **get low** to the ground and on eye level with your subject. **Garden** around the area to get rid of unwanted dead grass etc.

Be sure to leave the subject in the same condition as when you found it.

Don't forget the importance of good **composition**. Try not to have your subject dead center, let your eye be led into the picture, watch for distracting elements, choose horizontal or vertical format. Keep it simple.

Be patient and enjoy

References

John Shaw's – "Closeups in Nature"

Heather Angel – "How to Photograph Flowers"

www.beautifulbugs.com

Veritone Graduated Backgrounds: Superior Specialties Inc.
Appleton, WI 54915

This information about scanners and printers was provided by Charlie Lowell

Here are some thoughts I had on scanners and printers. Others may have other thoughts and opinions which I welcome!

Scanners:

There are two basic types of scanners; flat bed and dedicated film.

Flat Bed: Most people who have a scanner have one of these. They handle material such as 8.5 X 11 printed matter or photo prints quite well and are not expensive. You can get a reasonable flat bed scanner for under \$100 which will do a good job on most flat materials except film: To get good film scanning from a flat bed scanner, you will need to spend more like \$400 - \$600, and it will come with various film holders for negative film and slides as well as larger format film. The reports I have read suggest that these will do a good job, but not as good a job as a dedicated film scanner.

Dedicated film: These units will only do film and are small, stand-alone units that have little motors to feed the film past its sensor. Quality is for the most part very good and the cost is around \$500 for a low end unit, and more for a higher end unit. A low end unit will typically outperform a similarly priced flat bed, but won't

have the flexibility to scan anything else except film. If you have a lot of film and slides that you want to scan, this is probably the better choice. Nikon, Kodak, and Polaroid are a few of the manufacturers. Otherwise, get to know someone who has one.

Ritz Camera (and many other photo outlets) will scan negatives and slides for you, but the resolution may not be as high as you will find you want. This solution is very convenient as you get one CD with hundreds of pictures on it which are perfect for printing 5X7 even with some cropping and maybe even 8 X 10 without much cropping. And they are very convenient for emailing. The scanning cost is low, but will add up if you keep using the service, and you may later wish you had opted for better quality and higher resolution scanning.

Printers:

Most printers do a very good job. If archival (fade resistant) ink is important to you, then one should shop with that in mind. Many printers now offer archival inks of one sort or another. Printers tend to be cheaper than one would expect as they make their money on replacement ink cartridges which tend to be relatively expensive.

You might use the printer you have now for the time being and get used to the photo manipulation and printing processes with your present one. Then, you can shop for a bigger and better archival unit after having some experience under your belt.

The price of printers goes up as their ability to handle larger format paper goes up. If you are happy with prints that can fit on 8.5 X11, these are very popular and every manufacturer has lots of different low-end models. Prices might range up to \$300. If you want to print on 11 X 14 or 13 X 19 paper, the price will rise and the features may as well. Some even handle roll paper. For this you will likely spend \$500 or more. Epson's model 2200 (it may have been superseded) is a good example of a quality printer that can handle 13 X 19 and roll paper using archival inks. I think the 2200 costs about \$650 now (I paid about \$700 three years ago), but there are many other choices. You should be able to find a good large format printer for less than \$600. Be sure to check that the inks are archival. Cheaper printers use dye inks which look great, but fade rather quickly. If you have a printer now, don't throw it away as it may be useful for "lower end" tasks such as printing text.

As an aside: I just ordered a flat bed scanner that I plan to use for film. You might ask why I didn't buy a dedicated film scanner. Well, I had one for many years and it worked very well. It was a Nikon and cost \$1750 about 5 years ago and I practically wore it out. A similar unit today would cost about \$450, and would probably have higher

resolution than mine had. Anyway, I bought a new computer and the old scanner wouldn't work with the new computer (Isn't that always the case!). Also I have scanned most of the slides and color film that I wanted to scan already. I now want the capability of scanning larger format film (2.5 X 2.5) which it would not do. (Larger and more expensive dedicated film scanners are available which will!) So I looked around for a reasonably priced flat bed that would do a reasonable job on film. The one I chose (an Epson V700 at about \$525 from Amazon) is supposed to do almost as good a job as a dedicated scanner of about the same price. It will also do a good job on flat materials such as printed matter and old photographs, but that's relatively easy! I may regret it. I'll let you know!

Charlie Lowell
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Hunts Photo and Video is currently offering Camera Club Specials on various equipment. through 3/31/07. Call 800-221-1830 ext. 2332 or 2314 or email DigitalGuyGary@wbhunt.com. Their website is www.huntsphotoandvideo.com

Mass Audubon Visual Arts Center is presenting a photographic exhibition entitled 'A Field Guide to Life on Earth', Masterworks from the International League of Conservation Photographers, Feb.3 – Apr.22, 2007, opening reception Feb.3, 1-5 PM. 963 Washington St. Canton, MA. Tel. 781-821-8853. www.massaudubon.org/visualarts

PHOTOGRAPH OLD FLORIDA & NATURE

Want a winter break to Florida? Consider St. Augustine with lots of photo-ops. Stay at a fully equipped, 2 bedrm/2 bath condo **on the beach** for \$75./night (less if more people come). Available Feb 17 to March 3. Contact Eileen Kurkoski 617-928-0958 eileenfoto@earthlink.net

About the Sudbury Valley Nature Photographers

The Sudbury Valley Nature Photography group was formed in October 1995 by enthusiasts from the local area wishing to share informally their interest in and knowledge of photography. An encouraging rather than competitive environment prevails within the group, which includes over one hundred professional, amateur, and beginning photographers.

Although our major interest lies in nature photography, activities of the SVNPN group are not confined to nature photography. Programs and activities include a range of subject matter and techniques of interest to all photographers.

SVNPN has no formal structure: there are no officers, no competitions, and no dues. Activities are financed through voluntary contributions to the "Paper Plate Fund."

A monthly newsletter disseminates information via e-mail to members and anyone interested in SVNPN. Those who prefer to receive newsletters by U.S. mail should send 12 self-addressed, stamped envelopes to Chris Ridout, 10 Sherman Bridge Road, Wayland, MA 01778.

SVNPN meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, at Traditions, on Route 27, one mile south of Wayland Center, beginning at 6:30 P.M. with refreshments, and include instructional talks, slide presentations, and discussions of slides, digital images, and prints shown by members. The meetings end around 9:30 P.M. Anyone with an interest in photography is invited to attend.

Occasional field trips are arranged to locations as close as Concord's Great Meadows Wildlife Refuge and as far-flung as Utah's Arches National Park and Great Smokies National Park in Tennessee.

Please visit our website at <http://svnp.homestead.com>

Send suggestions and announcements for the newsletter to Chris Rowan – christopherowan@earthlink.net or 978-443-4587.