

Mile High Wildlife Photography Club

September 2007 Volume 31, Issue 9

Fall for Different Colors

Text and photos by Frank Weston

I doubt that there is a nature photographer that doesn't make some effort to shoot the autumn aspen in Colorado. Naturally, we all have our favorite spots where the "aspen are the most spectacular anywhere in the state!" Most of return to those favorite places every year. But sometimes we feel the need for something different, a new perspective, something we haven't photographed before, a challenge, something to get those creative juices flowing again, allowing us to see things anew. So this year, be daring. Go someplace you haven't been before, photograph some fall colors that you may not have photographed, shoot something other than autumn aspen.

There are a number of Colorado State Parks where the autumn aura can be exceptional. Some will provide the classic golden aspen, while others offer different

foliage that turn red, orange or yellow as the days shorten. Many of these parks are located within an easy drive of Denver suitable for day trips. Others may require an overnight stay, which is actually the best way to catch the evening light and then sunrise the next morning.

Day Trips

Castlewood Canyon State Park offers

beautiful Gambel Oak forests and mountain mahogany against the backdrop of vertical sandstone and volcanic ash cliffs. Located just south of Denver near Franktown, this is a very easy day trip.

Cheyenne Mountain State Park, Colorado's

newest park, sits at the base of Cheyenne Mountain southwest of Colorado Springs. A mosaic of grassland and Gambel oak highlight the transition from plains to mountain peaks.



Yampa River State Park

Eldorado State Park is tucked into a narrow canyon south of Boulder. Riparian communities are dominated by plains and narrowleaf cottonwood, Rocky Mountain maple, boxelder, chokecherry and American plum offset by towering cliffs and rocky spires.

Golden Gate Canyon State Park is only thirty miles from Denver, offering lush aspen meadows against the setting of snow-capped peaks.



Mueller State Park provides beautiful views of meadows and aspen groves set against the backdrop of Pikes Peak. Mountain mahogany dot the conifer forests of the parks western slopes.

Roxborough State Park is well known to most photographers for its stunning red rock formations. Add to that the autumn reds of dense forests of Gambel oak, mountain mahogany, buckbrush and it provides an easily accessible locale for a quick after-work shoot.

Overnight Trips

Rifle Falls State Park is a little gem located north of Rifle. The triple falls provide moisture to sustain lush vegetation dominated by boxelder and alder with dense wetland vegetation at the cliff base.

Steamboat Lake State Park is a perennial favorite for fall colors. A forest of



lodgepole and aspen offer a nice color contrast. In the meadows around the lake, willows provide their autumn hues.

Sylvan Lake State Park is a classic west slope mountain park. Located southwest of Eagle, it offers the classic aspen/montane conifer forests on the upper slopes. Along the creeks, willows and narrow-leaf cottonwood offer their own unique autumn hues.

Vega State Park sits high up on Grand Mesa, east of Grand Junction. It presents a dense aspen forest on the high slopes to the west with Gambel oak, serviceberry and chokecherry coloring the eastern shores.

Yampa River State Park offers some of the best cottonwood groves on the west slope. The park stretches along 134 miles of the Yampa River covering broad flat valleys through dramatic, narrow, vertical-cliffed canyons.

At The Last Meeting ...

...a lively discussion on the possibility/advisability of procuring judges from outside the club for competitions such as the recent TWE exhibit and Nature's Best occupied a goodly portion of the business part of the evening's agenda. Our guest for the evening was outdoor and nature specialist Don Mammoser who presented a digital slide show on his favorite shooting locations from around the world-- from Lyons, Colorado to the lions of Africa. Mammoser also autographed copies of his recently released book "*Wildflowers of Colorado Field Guide*". His next book "*Photographers Guide to the Colorado Rockies: Where to find perfect shots and how to take them*" is scheduled for an October 1 release.

August Competition Results

Judge: Chuck Winter

Slides

Wildlife (6)- 1st Fi Rust *Northern Flicker Male at Nest Hole*

2nd Fi Rust *Black-tailed Prairie Dog Mom & Baby*

Scenic (6) 1st Mary Paetow *Deer Creek Falls*

2nd Rita Summers *Namib Desert Scenic*

HOM Wildlife (3) Fi Rust *Tree Swallow on Nest Box*

Open (1) Nick Burden *Lone Gernaium*

Prints

Wildlife (5) 1st Russ Burden *Learning to Leap (Mtn. Goat)*

2nd Judy Deist *Red Dragon (Dragon Fly)*

Scenic (3) Russ Burden *Cannon Beach Sunset*

Open (3) Reb Babcock *Technicolor Bear Dance*

From TWE...

An email from TWE praises MHWPC for the Wildlife Babies.

The photo club has given us yet another quality show that opened Wednesday in the Community Gallery called Wildlife Babies. The 24 colorful images skillfully capture all sorts of wonderful animal antics. Four more of our bronze sculptures on the same theme will be added just after Boa Ball. The show runs through Nov 11.

Braggin' Rights

This is a disappointing first. There are no braggin' rights this month.

Upcoming Programs

September- Gary Haines (a former member) who runs the Grizzly Creek photo gallery in Georgetown will offer a show of his recent images.

Club Field Trips

Listed below are tentative dates for club field trips.

- The next field trip is the wild horse photo shoot in South Dakota, September 22nd. There are two openings left. Non-members are welcome to fill these last two positions.. Contact Charlie Summers.

Hospitality for September Meeting

Snacks: Brenda Fletcher
Drinks: Judy Deist

Getting to Know You...

Chris Loffredo

1. What drew you to nature/wildlife photography? When?



I turned to nature photography about 15 years ago. I always enjoyed nature and the outdoors but had been doing photography in an urban setting. Finally I put the two desires together and sort of got hooked.

2. What format/equipment do you use? Why?

All digital. I was a 35mm film shooter but went digital within the past year. My film equipment is up for sale, and I even got my dad into digital. Now all our 35mm equipment is up on Ebay. My digital equipment is Canon, of course. I had Canon in 35mm format so now I can use the same lenses for the new stuff.

3. Where's your favorite shot spot(s)?

For far away it has to be Africa. You know you can go into a zoo and get a shot of a wild animal, but in Africa in a week you can shoot 40 different things. You never know what is around the next corner, behind the next tree. State-side, it's gotta be Bosque Del Apache. It is one of most fabulous spots in the winter. It's such an awesome experience to watch 10,000 birds lift off in front of you.

4. Other than your camera, what piece of equipment would you return home to get if you'd forgotten it? (i.e., your most important piece of field equipment).

My battery charger, because of all the digital gear you have to carry electrical stuff to keep it

going. When I went to Africa digital support gear weighed as much as my film used to. The laptop case is 25 pounds itself and then with all the other electrical stuff I easily had a 40 pound photo pack with camera and lenses.

I don't mind, though. There's nothing I miss in film. With digital I can do anything and shoot a lot more. Plus I can try things instead of conserving film. I like the ease of sharing. I can come out of the field, go to the Super 8, or wherever, download my shots into the laptop and have immediate, instant gratification.

5. What do you think is in the future for Camera Club?

The last year or two have been a transition for the club from film to digital. With the rate of advancements in the technology coming so fast, I think, as a club, we can help share ideas and learn from each other's stories. I know that every time I travel and every time somebody opens Photo Shop I learn something I didn't know before. Helping people take better pictures, sharing locations, and learning the technology aspect of modern photography are more important than ever before.

6. What do you do when you're not behind the camera? (i.e., occupation or other avocations).

My job as a corporate accountant pays the bills. I have a 10-year-old son who is into sports, so a lot of my energies go there. I play golf and am studying tae kwon do. My son has a black belt in tae kwon do and I'm about half-way there myself.

Fi Rust

1. What drew you to nature/wildlife photography? When?



I've almost always had a camera in my hands, my grandmother gave me my first Brownie when I was very little. I loved horses growing up and was always photographing horses. Then when I moved from California to Florida in 1990, I

thought I was going to do travel photography, I didn't even know wildlife photography existed as a profession. A while after I moved there I went to an "Everglades Awareness Day" and approached one of the photographers there to ask if she knew anyone who led photography tours of the Everglades. She said she did. "She" was Helen Longest Saccone, the founder of Nature Photographer magazine. I went on a tour with her and overnight I was hooked. In 1994 I traveled to Rocky Mountain National Park for my birthday. Once there I told myself I wanted to live in or near the park by my next birthday. One week before my birthday in 1995 I moved to Boulder.

2. What format/equipment do you use? Why?

I use Canon. That started when my father gave me an EA1, never really had any other choice after that. I went digital three years ago and now use the Canon ESD Mark II, with the Canon 30D as backup.

3. Where's your favorite shot spot(s)?

I go to Rocky Mountain National Park a lot but I spend a great deal of time at Prospect Park for the foxes and the ducks in winter. Pawnee Grasslands is also a favorite for shooting foxes. I've probably been to St. Vrain State Park a dozen times this year for the birds – it may be near the highway, but it's away from people. And I love Upper Bear Meadows at Rocky for the nesting birds. It's a special kind of place where you can interact with nature on own, away from the crowds. But then, I had the best time at Mt. Evans this year I've ever had. The kids were great, especially when you can walk away from crowds, and get to do your own thing.

4. Other than your camera, what piece of equipment would you return home to get if you'd forgotten it? (i.e., your most important piece of field equipment).

In old days, it would have been the tripod, but I don't use a tripod much now. Binoculars always go with me. And, of course, the photo vest which has my flash cards in it.

5. What do you like best about Camera Club?

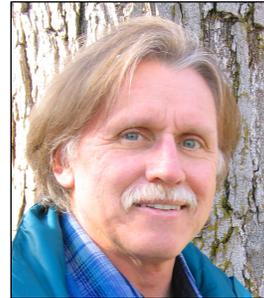
Oh, the best thing is just getting to know all the people over time. You learn something from everybody. I've made a lot of really good friends through camera club and photography. Learning and sharing are really great. For instance, I really enjoyed the group effort putting together the Nature's Best entry for the club competition.

6. What do you do when you're not behind the camera? (i.e., occupation or other avocations).

I'm hardly ever not behind the camera. Sometimes I do temp work but that's not very interesting. I do some pet photography in addition to my wildlife photography. I guess you could say that's my life: most of my friends are photographers and I'm either out there shooting or at the computer editing or processing images.

Frank Weston

1. What drew you to nature/wildlife photography? When?



Good question. I've always been interested in nature, so when got into in photography it was a natural. I got my first camera probably about '78 and got interested in nature photography in the late 90s. I got really serious about it all

around 2002. I grew up around here and have been backpack, hiking, and fishing since I was 10, so I've always been fascinated by nature outdoors and Colorado. Plus, after 25 years in the environmental business, cleaning up hazardous waste sites, I wanted to take a look at good side of the country instead of the bad side.

2. What format/equipment do you use? Why?

Mostly I use medium format and I still use film, because a medium format digital set-up requires a 30-year mortgage. I shoot medium format because I like to do large sized gallery prints and I'm not convinced digital can do that, not 35mm format anyway. It's inevitable that I will evolve into digital, I know. Not evolving

would be like riding around in horse drawn buggy; you can do it but doesn't make a whole lot of sense anymore.

3. Where's your favorite shot spot(s)?

I really don't have a favorite spot. I kinda feel good photos are where you find 'em. Some places are easier than others, but to say I prefer one spot over another is to limit me. New places are a challenge and an inspiration, and I don't want to shoot the same thing over and over again. I want do different things: Be inspired a little differently, find different places to learn and to grow.

4. Other than your camera, what piece of equipment would you return home to get if you'd forgotten it? (i.e., your most import piece of field equipment).

Camera and film are most important, of course, and as long as I have those I wouldn't come back for anything. One of the ways to challenge yourself as a photographer is to leave your most favorite lens at home, and take your least favorite, then explore with it, learn to be a better photographer for it. It's just a "can do" attitude.

5. What do you think is in the future for Camera Club?

Camera club is going to grow. Right now its focus and emphasis on nature and wildlife is a bit narrow. I think the club needs to be more open to outside influences. As Camera Club grows it's going to have to embrace more outside influences -- more people with more diverse points of view. Outside influences might include being open to more different definitions of "what is a good photo", perhaps accepting more artistic definitions, and broadening the arena of digital manipulation.

6. What do you do when you're not behind the camera? (i.e., occupation or other avocations).

Starve.

From the Webmaster

The MHWPC website (www.mhwpc.org) now includes two new features:

- A blog for current events like fall foliage and spring wildflower reports where all visitors can view the entries, but only members can post.
- An ads board where members can list items for sale or want ads, and any visitor to the site will be able to view the ads.

If you have any suggestions for how to improve the website, contact the webmaster (webmaster@mhwpc.org).

Library News from the Lamb's



Hi everyone! Can you believe that the summer is coming to an end? Well, we have lots of reading and viewing materials available. Stop by

and check us out. If you have not returned things over the summer please contact Betsy or bring them to the next meeting. We are checking out lots of newly acquired reference books on digital photography. We look forward to seeing you at the library table. Check something out and be in the nightly drawing for a goody. (Roger Kinney won last month.) See you there!

Joe and Betsy Lamb.

inlamb@comcast.net or 303-841-2565

Workshops and Seminars

Russ Burden's Photography Tours

Visit russburdenphotography.com. Contact Russ at 303 791-9997, rburden@ecentral.com

Destinations include:

- Sept. 22-Oct. 1, 2007 - Tetons and Yellowstone Natl. Park in Fall -10 day trip
- Oct. 6 - 12, 2007 - Vermont in Autumn

- Oct. 20 - 25, 2007 - Hunts Mesa in Monument Valley and Capital Reef NP.
- Nov. 3 - 9, 2007 - Bryce Canyon and Zion National Park
- Dec. 1 - 7, 2007 - Bosque Del Apache and White Sands Natl. Mon.

James Hager Photography - Small Group Photo Safaris, www.JamesHagerPhoto.com
James@JamesHagerPhoto.com

- Kenya in Sept 2007: Classic safari to Samburu and Masai Mara National Reserves - 20 days, Sept 25 to Oct 14, 2007.

Mile High Wildlife Photography Club

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TEAM LEADERS

Monthly Programs: *Chuck Winter*

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Membership: *Rita Summers*

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Special Programs/Field Trips:

Chuck Winter

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Competition: *Russ Burden*

Competition Scoring: *Chris Loffredo*

Competition Entries:

Judging Coordinator: *Fred Stearns* 303 400-0385

Snacks/Greeters: *Roger Kinney* 303-369-6120

Publicity: *Buzz Soard* 303-779-9933

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Webmaster: *James Hager*

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BOARD of DIRECTORS

Rita Summers * Russ Burden

Chuck Winter * Fi Rust * Frank Weston

September Meeting

Wednesday September 12

7:00 pm – 10:00 pm

at

THE WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE

10035 South Peoria

Competition: Digital

August Attendance: 45
