CLOSE UP

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY MISSOURI NATURE & ENVIRONMENTAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

Volume 16, Number 3 March 2011

FEATURES:

People & Places
Pages 1 & 2

Meeting Information
Page 3

Nature Calls
Page 3

Contact Information
Page 4

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Scott Avetta

A hush is over everything, Silent as women wait for love; The world is waiting for the spring.
~ Sarah Teasdale
American Poet
1844-1933

PEOPLE & PLACES

MoNEP Exhibit at Powder Valley Conservation Area

Powder Valley Nature Center has invited MoNEP to create a photography exhibit for their 20th anniversary celebration this fall. The exhibit will be on display during the month of **October** in the hallway by the classrooms of the Nature Center. We will be looking for submissions that feature natural subject matter that can be found in Missouri. Special consideration will be given to work that features shots taken at **Powder Valley Nature Center** and at the nearby **Emmenegger Nature Park**. With spring on the horizon, now is a great time to get out and start photographing and collecting work that will qualify for this exhibit. We have not yet set a submission deadline, but we hope to have the selections for the show made by mid-summer and the exhibit framed by mid-September.

As always, we will be looking for volunteers to help with matting, framing, putting up and tearing down the exhibit. If you are interested in helping, or have questions about the exhibit please contact the Community Outreach Committee Co-Chair, **Lori Purk** at **purkyl8r@aol.com** or you may call her at **314-869-7427**. This is a good opportunity to meet your fellow members and show off some of the exceptional shots you capture.

For those of you not familiar with the Emmenegger Nature Park, it is located west of Powder Valley across the bridge that crosses Highway I-44, just beyond the entrance to Powder Valley. Visit **mdc.mo.gov/atlas/region/stl** for more information about this 93-acre site, which borders the Meramec River.

SNR Youth Photo Contest

MoNEP has once again joined with **Shaw Nature Reserve** to sponsor its 2011 youth nature photography contest. ***Take A Shot!*** is open to children ages 14 and under. Entries must be taken at Shaw Nature Reserve between **April 1st and July 15th, 2011**. All entries must be received by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 15th**.

Submissions should represent one of the following four categories:

- Flora – any plant found at SNR
- Wildlife – amphibians, reptiles, birds or mammals found at the Reserve
- Miniature World – insects, spiders, mosses or fungi
- Trees – close-ups or landscapes featuring trees at SNR

MoNEP will also be offering a one and a half hour session on the morning of **Saturday, June 11th** to provide contestants with help in the form of technical and compositional guidance. This is a great opportunity for MoNEP volunteers to share some of their knowledge while mentoring children who are interested in entering the contest. We will put out a call for volunteers, as June gets closer.

MoNEP will also provide the judges for the contest, as well as the prizes. Judging will be based upon the subject matter, composition, creativity and technical difficulty of the images. There will be 1st, 2nd and 3rd place prizes in each category and honorable mentions.

Visit **www.shawnature.org** for SNR hours and other contest details, including how to submit images, acceptable formats, entry forms and delivery instructions.

Annual Membership!

Dues are past due! Many of our members have renewed for 2011, but roughly 40% have not yet done so. If you haven't renewed and intend to, please fill out and sign the membership form found at **www.monep.org** under **About Us**. You can mail your membership form, along with a check made out to **MoNEP** to **Vicki and Shawn Northrop** at **1111 Wilmington Ave, St. Louis, MO 63111.** You may also pay by check or cash at the March meeting. Dues are **$25 per person or $35 for a two-member household**.

New Members

Welcome to our newest members, **John** and **Martha McAlister**.

Member News

An image of **Scott Evers'** was featured on **National Geographic's** website as part of their ***Daily Dozen*** on **February 22nd**. His image is of a bald eagle riding the ice down the Mississippi River at Alton, Illinois. It is the final photo among the images for the fourth week of February. To see Scott's photo, visit: **http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/your-shot/daily-dozen**.

Mac Mackay is one of the organizers of a local **Meetup Group**, the **St. Louis Creative Photographers.** The group encourages members to share their knowledge with each other with the goal of improving their photographic skills and having fun. The group is holding two events in March. On **March 12th**, there will be a photographic bird scavenger hunt from **8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** at **Rockwoods Reservation**. The event is free of charge, with a request for a donation for the Wild Bird Sanctuary and the Tree House. At **10:30** on **March 20th**, they will also offer a presentation on using Off Camera Flash by Matt O'Haver. Participants will learn the basics of using flash off the camera, as well as the use of wireless triggering systems. Matt will also demonstrate the use of Poverty Wizard flash triggers, and will be giving away a set to a lucky member of the group. The location of this meeting is the Barnes and Noble Book Store in Crestwood. This event is open to all.

For additional activities of the St. Louis Creative Photographers Meetup Group, visit **www.meetup.com/The-St-Louis-Creative-Photographers-Group**.

World Eagle Day

Join the **World Bird Sanctuary** as it celebrates **World Eagle Day** on **March 20th** from **10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** This free event focuses on eagles from around the world and provides the opportunity to learn more about these majestic birds. WBS will feature presentations by naturalists throughout the day. Bring your camera! There will be live eagle shows as well as photo opportunities with a bald eagle. Visitors can tour the WBS wildlife hospital. This event is geared for the whole family. There will be a free kids craft center, concession stands and eagle gifts and souvenirs for sale. Visit their web site at **www.worldbirdsanctuary.org.**

Major Photo Competition

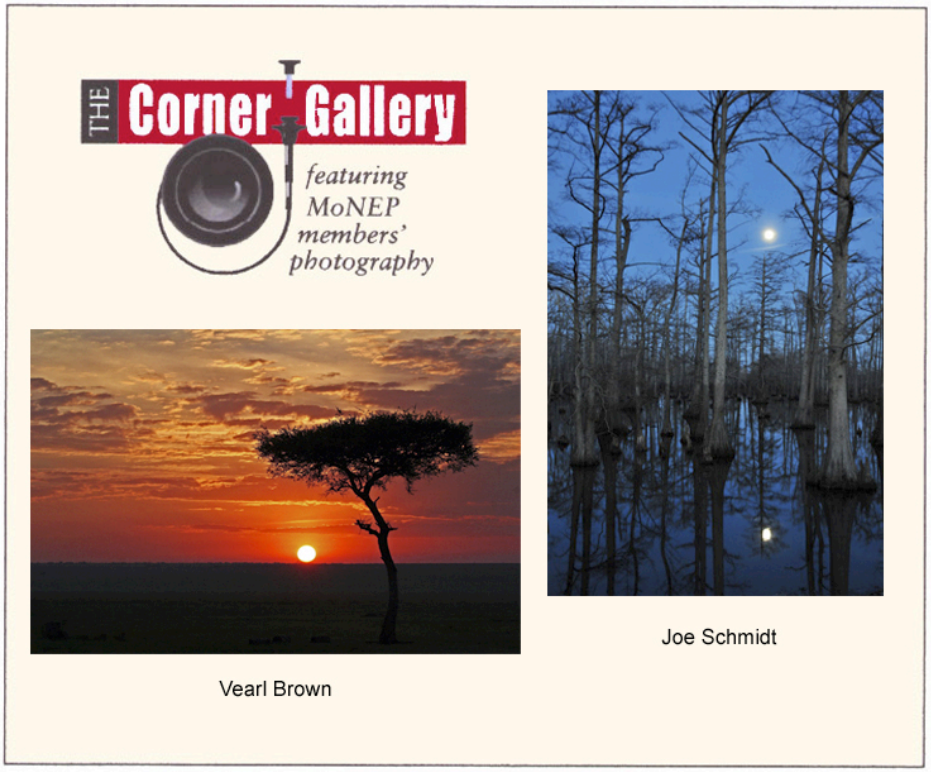
Act fast! The **Veolia Environment Wildlife Photographer of the Year** entry deadline is **March 18th**. This prestigious competition is open to both amateur and pro photographers. Sponsored by **London's Natural History Museum** and **BBC Wildlife Magazine**, there are significant financial prizes. Winning images will be shown in an exhibit and published in a commemorative book. For details on entering go to: **www.nhm.ac.uk/visit-us/whats-on/temporary-exhibitions/wpy-entry/index.jsp**.

Backyard Birding Festival

On February 5th, MoNEP had a table at the Missouri Botanical Garden's annual **Backyard Birding Festival**. Several members helped staff the MoNEP booth during the day, including **Margy and Dan Terpstra, Dennis McCarthy, Ken Biddle and Don Morice**. The day started off with a surprise snowstorm that initially kept attendance to a minimum, but by late morning the sun was out, the snow was melting and people started to arrive. From that time until the display area closed at 3:00 p.m., a steady progression of visitors stopped by the booth to learn about MoNEP. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped at this event. Outreach programs such as these are a good way to inform the public about MoNEP. If any member would like to volunteer to help with future outreach programs, please contact one of the Community Outreach Co-Chairs, Lori Purk at **PURKYL8R@aol.com** or Don Morice at **donkm63@charter.net**.

Correction

The editor apologizes for incorrectly attributing Dan Terpstra's images of the Bill Fortney seminar in the printed version of the February issue of Close-Up. Thanks, Dan, for taking and providing the images.



MEETINGS & programs

Meeting Dates and Share & Show Themes

Tuesday, March 15th – Trees
Tuesday, April 19th – Wild Kingdom

Meetings begin promptly at **7:00 p.m.** at ***Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center***.

Share and Show Nature Images

Members are invited to share their **nature** images at each MoNEP meeting. If you wish to participate, you should prepare up to **four (4) nature-related images**. Be sure to:

- Resize your images so vertical images are 768 pixels high and horizontal images are 768 pixels wide.
- Save your images as .jpg files.
- Place your four resized images on a drive or disc in a folder with your name and the meeting date.
- Give your images to **Jerry Miller** no later than 6:30 p.m. the night of the meeting.

For more information about Share and Show formatting requirements, please see ***Resize an Image for Submission*** in the photo tips section on the MoNEP web site, **www.monep.org**.

March Speaker – Mike Arduser

Missouri Department of Conservation biologist, **Mike Arduser** will take us on a virtual trip to the **LaBarque Creek Natural Area** at the **March 15th** meeting. Mike will introduce us to a natural gem on the edge of the St. Louis metropolitan area. LaBarque Creek Natural Area, located in northwest Jefferson County, is a rugged landscape with an interesting geology and biological richness. An impressive variety of natural communities thrive in the area, including small sandstone and dolomite glades, sandstone cliffs, acid seeps, forests, woodlands and an Ozark stream with a remarkable assemblage of fishes. In the deep, cool, moist sandstone canyons, a number of plants and animals typical of more northern regions hold on, sheltered from the extremes of Missouri's climate. Learn about this unique area, which is located only a half hour from downtown St. Louis.

April Speaker – Cindy Gilberg

Horticulturist and Missouri native **Cindy Gilberg** will be the presenter at our meeting on **April 19th**. Cindy co-owned and operated Gilberg Perennial Farms until its close in 2006 and now serves as a consultant. Her presentation will be on ***Native Plants to Attract Birds and Butterflies.*** Cindy will discuss how adding native plants back into our urban landscapes helps replace and enhance much-needed habitat that has been lost to development. A greater diversity of habitat attracts a greater diversity of fauna, from butterflies and birds to the fascinating world of pollinators. Cindy's presentation will cover habitat requirements as well as specific native plants to include in your garden to attract specific species at various times of the season. You won't need to go further than your own property to observe the natural world.

February Speaker Recap

Scott Avetta opened his presentation, ***Common Mistakes Photographers Make and How to Avoid Them*** at the February meeting with a quote from Albert Einstein: *There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.* Scott suggested that viewing life as if everything were a miracle would not only enhance your life, but would also enhance your photography. By trying to view the natural world this way, photographers will find a greater number of photographic opportunities.

Scott, who teaches photography to shooters of various levels, shared tips and advice to help all of the audience elevate their art to the next level. Among his advice was to know the "rules" of photographic composition, but to treat them more as guidelines. These guidelines, such as the "Rule of Thirds", don't need to be adhered to if you have a good reason to disregard them.

Also bear in mind the story your subject tells and try to capture that story. Although story telling may not create the best image, an image that tells a story adds to its impact.

Scott noted that although a group of photographers may be shooting from essentially the same spot, they can have dramatically different levels of success with the same image. This can be due to small differences in how they approach the subject. Approaching the subject from different perspectives or choosing a different length lens can make a world of difference in the finished product.

Give your subjects space within the frame and consider photographing at eye level for a more personal connection with the subject and better control of the background. If you are shooting an insect on a plant try to get down to its level. Provide it with some breathing room in the image.

Watch for mergers that can cause an image to appear busy and cluttered, unless you are trying to create a busy and cluttered feeling. When shooting an image with lots of elements, compose it so that there is as much separation between objects as possible. Scott showed an image of trees reflected in water. You could see where one tree ended and the other began. Look for objects that help anchor your image and check that the edges of your image are clear.

Perhaps most of all, Scott advised that when shooting an image, you should be sure what your subject is and be able to articulate it. Ask yourself, what is it in an overall scene that caught your eye? That will help you isolate and focus upon your subject.

Scott also emphasized the importance of the mood of an image. Mood can make an ordinary subject extraordinary. He finished by quoting Andrew Wyeth, who said: *I think you have to use your eyes as well as your emotion, and one without the other just doesn't work.*

Many thanks to Scott for a wonderful and enlightening presentation. To see more of Scott's work, visit his web site at **www.scottavetta.com**.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Missouri Nature and Environmental Photographers is to provide a forum for individuals interested in the field of nature photography and the environment, provide education, gather and disseminate information, and promote nature photography as an art form and medium of communication.

MoNEP meetings are held once a month at the Powder Valley Conservation Area Nature Center on 11715 Cragwold Road, near the intersection of I-44 and I-270 in southwestern St. Louis County. Monthly meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, January through November. Meetings take place in the Nature Center auditorium. Specific dates are posted in the newsletter.

MoNEP is an officially registered service mark. Use of the logo without MoNEP board approval is prohibited.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT www.monep.org

CLOSE-UP

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