



CLOSE-UP

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MONEP News

2021 Holiday Show

The 2021 MONEP Holiday Show will be held on Tuesday, December 14th at Powder Valley Nature Center in Kirkwood. Sign-in will start at 6:30 p.m. and the show will begin at 7:00. Powder Valley Nature Center is located at 11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, Missouri, 63122. Family and friends are invited to attend. The highlight of the evening is a fabulous digital presentation of members' images set to music. Jerry Miller has been working hard, creating the presentation. This year, due to Covid concerns, we will not be serving food or drink.

Annual Membership Renewal

MONEP membership runs from January through December each year, so it is time for all members to renew, if you haven't already done so. Dues are \$30 per person and \$40 for a household of up to four. There are three ways to renew:

1. Membership dues may be submitted in person at the November meeting along with your completed form. You can pay with cash or by a check made out to MONEP. If you pay by cash, please be sure to have the exact amount. NOTE: We will not be collecting membership forms or payment during the Holiday Show in December.
2. You can mail your 2022 renewal form, along with a check made out to MONEP, to our Treasurer, Linda Moder, at 5341A Sutherland, St. Louis, Missouri 63109. Please do not mail cash.
3. You can pay using PayPal by visiting our website at <https://monep.org/membership/>, but you must also submit a completed 2022 membership form, via email or mail to Linda Moder.

Please note that we have a newly revised 2022 Membership form, which every member must fill out on both sides. If you register by PayPal, please also submit your signed and scanned 2022 membership form to linda_monep@hotmail.com or mail it to her address above. If you have questions about membership, please contact our Membership Chair, Michelle Jones, at 314-496-7616.

Member News

We welcome these members, who joined MONEP in 2021: Catherine Boyd, Brittany Hahn, Michael Moore, Jane Palmer, Ron O'Reilly, and Sherry Teefey. We are delighted to have you among us. Please let us know if you have any questions about your membership and the procedures for participating in meetings, Show and Share or other MONEP activities.



Image Courtesy: Mark Cherry



Image Courtesy: Joe Kopp

Cover Images (from left to right and top to bottom):

Richard Spener, John McAlister, Nancy Phillips, RJ Wilner, Dick Roman, Jane Griesenauer, Dick Roman, Tim Bade, Toni Armstrong, Kathy Cherry, Barb Addelson

MONEP Meetings

Meeting Dates and Times

Tuesday, November 16th from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at Powder Valley Nature Center

Tuesday, December 14th at Powder Valley Nature Center, Sign in at 6:30 pm, Holiday Show at 7:00 pm

Powder Valley Meeting Protocols

Please note and observe the following protocols when attending meetings at Powder Valley:

- Powder Valley strongly recommends that all visitors wear a mask to meetings held there.
- We will provide hand sanitizer and extra masks should you forget to bring one.
- We ask that attendees maintain social distancing for those people who are unvaccinated or vulnerable. Please space yourselves apart in the auditorium, which has 250 seats.
- To protect MONEP from liability at this meeting and future events, each and every person attending the meeting with need to have read the Liability and Assumption of Risk waiver, and must indicate that they have read and agree to the terms of the waiver on a sign-in sheet at the table as you enter the auditorium
- If you are unwilling to sign the waiver agreement, you will not be able to attend the meeting.

November Meeting – Bats with Shelly Colatskie

Join us and Shelly Colatskie, a Naturalist for the Missouri Department of Conservation for a program on bat biology and ecology. Shelly will include information about what makes a bat a bat, a little about bats of the world, bats of Missouri, threats to Missouri's bats, and how we can help Missouri's bats. Shelly has been a Naturalist for the Missouri Department of Conservation at Powder Valley Conservation Nature Center since May 2017. She graduated from Missouri State University In 2009 with a Master's in Biology, specializing in bat ecology. She began her career with MDC in April of 2010 as a graduate intern working on terrestrial and aquatic invasive species, both plant and animal. Shelly then worked as the MDC Assistant Cave Ecologist from 2010 to 2017. She was responsible for coordinating cave surveys across the state, monitoring not only bat species, but all cave life.

Show & Share

Members may submit up to five (5) nature-related images to be shown at upcoming meetings. Images do not have to be recent and you do not have to talk about your images. If you would like to have your images shown anonymously, or not be called on to talk about them, let Jerry Miller know in the email you use to submit your images. Submissions are due by November 13th for the November meeting.

Please follow the submission guidelines below and pay particular attention to how you name your files. We ask you to name each image with your last name, then first name, the year and month of your submission and the subject.

Show and Share generally comes after the presentation during our meetings. Submissions are due by midnight on the Saturday prior to each month's meeting. See the dates below.

- Resize your images so vertical images are a maximum of 1,800 pixels high and horizontal images are 1,800 pixels wide.
- Name your images using your last name then first name and the year and month of submission as well as the subject. For example, SmithJane-2021-09-Subject. No spaces.
- Save your images as .jpg files. Your saved images should be less than 4 MB in size.
- Compress your five resized images into a zip file. (If you don't know how to do this step, just send them as they are.)

Attach the zip file to an email addressed to share@monep.org by midnight Saturday, November 13.

September Meeting Recap: Bird Photography with Jane Palmer

Jane Palmer provided us with a very entertaining and informative program on Photographing Birds and Wildlife: My Secrets to Success during the September meeting. Although Jane is primarily a landscape and underwater photographer, Covid forced her to find something to photograph without leaving home. She decided to start photographing birds in her backyard. Eventually, that led to travel within the United States to places like Texas to photograph many different species.

Jane started the evening by discussing the ethics of bird and wildlife photography. Then she addressed camera settings and shooting techniques, composition, and how to tell a story. Below is a synopsis of her many excellent points.

Ethics:

As nature photographers, it is important for us to learn about the behavior of our subjects and to understand the challenges they face. It is always important to respect wildlife and to practice good field etiquette to minimize our impact on the animals and their environment. Specific actions Jane asked us to bear in mind are:

- Maintain sufficient distance from the subject, especially from their nesting areas and young.
- Don't use recordings of bird songs to attract birds to your location. This can cause them significant stress.
- If you see evidence of stress from your subject, move away.
- Use a zoom lens rather than approach an animal too closely.
- Model good behavior for other photographers.

Exposure Triangle:

Jane talked extensively about the exposure triangle: aperture, shutter speed, and ISO.

Aperture:

She often shoots wide open at f4 or 5.6. That wide open aperture allows more light into the camera and helps to blur the background because it creates a shallow depth of field. She likes to set her aperture as she starts out for the day, and then doesn't change it after that.

Shutter Speed:

When photographing birds, or other moving subjects, shutter speed is the most critical part of the exposure triangle. The shutter speed you use will change depending on how fast the bird is moving and whether or not you wish to freeze the action. Jane starts with a speed of 1/1250 for slow moving birds, but commonly uses 1/4000 or faster for birds in flight.

Example with Birds in Flight: For birds in flight, Jane shot at 1/2500 to get the bird tack sharp in the frame. For perched birds that are not moving much, you can use a much slower shutter speed, such a 1/500 of a second. Most of all, Jane suggested observing the birds in advance to get a sense of how quickly they move and then shooting accordingly.

ISO:

Finally, use the appropriate ISO to accomplish proper exposure. If that means a high ISO that causes noise in the image, you can fix that in post processing using a plugin such as Topaz DeNoise. If the light is constant, you can just set the exposure and forget about adjusting it. However, if you are shooting in changing light you might want to use Auto ISO, so you can concentrate on capturing the images rather than constantly adjusting your settings.

A helpful feature of today's cameras is the highlight warning alert, also known as the blinkies. If you are shooting a bird with white feathers, this feature will warn you if you are overexposing, or blowing out, the highlights by causing the blinkies to show in playback on a DSLR, or in the

viewfinder of a mirrorless camera. You cannot recapture the details of the head feathers of a bald eagle if you have overexposed the image. Jane finds this tool critical, because black and white birds can really fool your meter. She suggests enabling the highlight alert no matter what metering mode you're using.

Example:

When photographing a snowy owl, she first metered off of snow to get the correct reading. When shooting crested caracaras from a photo blind in South Texas, she metered the scene before the peak action to determine her exposure setting. She checked the histogram and looked to see whether there were any blinkies and then adjusted, as needed, so that she was ready when it was time to photograph the birds.

Exposure and Focus Summary:

To wrap up her thoughts on exposure for birds and other wildlife, Jane emphasized that you set the ISO to get a good histogram and avoid blown highlights. Once you start shooting, check your display on the back of the camera to make sure that the eye and details are sharp. If they are, your shutter speed is fast enough.



Techniques and Tips for Photographing Birds and Wildlife:

- Jane practices rapid fire shooting, because the action happens fast, and you have the best chance of capturing that one great shot if your fire away. You can choose that best shot when you are back at your computer, reviewing what you captured.
- Begin shooting before the moment you want to capture, or you will miss the shot. Learn to anticipate action, shoot early and continue shooting after the action ends.
- When photographing birds, remember some of the basic concepts of composition, such as the rule of thirds. Don't put birds in the center of the image and, if the bird is in flight, make sure to give it room to fly further into the frame. Try to tell a story with your image, rather than simply taking a documenting shot. Look for quality light to add to the mood of the scene: soft and diffuse, golden hour, backlight, fog or mist.
- Metering Mode: Jane likes to shoot in manual mode. It provides her with the greatest control over exposure. However, as with many aspects of photography, shooting in manual requires lots of practice, so work on learning how to use it before you head into the field.
- Jane goes out in the field with a shot list to help guide her so that she comes home with a range of images. For example, she might set out with this list for photographing a specific bird:
 - Tight head shot
 - Full body perched
 - Full body in flight with nice wing position
 - Unique behavior shot, such as mating displays, preening, caring for young
 - Moody, if the conditions are right, such as fog
 - A wider shot, showing the bird in its environment.
- Hand holding will give you the freedom to follow a flying subject, but is hard to do, especially with a long lens. Practice.
- If you use a tripod, a gimbal head will allow you to follow the bird better than a ball, tilt or other type of tripod head. Again, Practice!
- Use high quality, large memory cards with very fast write speeds.
- Download and back up your images at the end of each day and especially before using the card again.

- Format your cards in the camera at the start of the day, so you are ready to go and don't miss any of the action.
- Focus is critical to successful wildlife photography. The animal's eye must be sharp, so use continuous auto focus. Jane recommends that you learn your camera inside and out and find out what fine tuning adjustments will help you customize your camera to allow for rapid changes in focus modes. Then, before heading out on a major shoot, practice a lot!

Sample Images:

Jane provided some great examples with her own images of different birds and reinforced how these techniques enabled her to get the shot she wanted. Below are the steps she took to capture this beautiful loon shot at sunset:

- She had studied loon behavior for years, but had spent 4 days with this pair and knew their patterns well enough to predict when they would dive, or feed their babies or do a wing flap
- Jane noticed this loon preening and knew a wing flap was coming. She checked exposure, got in position and waited. The loon went up, raised her wings and did the wing flap and Jane held down the shutter for over 100 shots.
- Fast Frame rate to allow Jane to choose the ultimate moment
- When Jane got home, she picked the peak of the action and was able to process the shot to bring out the colors of the golden setting sun on this bird.



Jane talked about her experience seeing and photographing a great grey owl the first time. She started by taking some documenting shots. After checking that her settings were good and that the shot was in focus, she worked to find something that would tell more of the story. By zooming in, she got details of the bird, its incredible eyes, and the head feathers dusted with tiny snowflakes.



Final Thoughts:

To sum up her talk, Jane shared these points:

- Study and practice before you go out for a shoot. This is the biggest step to a successful shoot.
- Keep your shot list in your head, try to move beyond documenting and learn to tell the story of the animal or location.
- What you do matters! Be an ethical photographer. Show others that you can get amazing shots without endangering the animals that we love.
- Shoot a lot but only show your best!
- Above all else, savor the moments when you are privileged to see a beautiful animal living their best life.

Thank you, Jane, for such an excellent program and for sharing your wonderful images and engaging stories with us. It was a truly memorable presentation.

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. Monthly meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, except for December. Meetings start at 6:30 pm. Specific dates and meeting locations are posted in the newsletter and on the website. The bi-monthly newsletter is edited by Barbara Addelson and designed by Dug Threewitt.

Visit our website at www.monep.org