



Placer Color



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Newsletter of the Placer Camera Club

May 2008

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<http://www.placercameraclub.org>

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Placer Camera Club meets the third Tuesday of each month, except July and August, at 7:00PM in the Beecher Room of the Auburn Placer County Library, 350 Nevada Street, Auburn, Ca. **Visitors Welcome!**

This months meeting will be Tuesday **May 20, 2008**. Informal gathering at **6:30** with the meeting starting **promptly at 7 PM**.

This month is our **print image evaluations**. Our categories are Nature, Travel, Open & Monochrome. 2 entries per category, members only.

Don't forget your annual entries. 4 entries per category. Get your prints and slides to Judy Hooper by June 1st. I have most all the digital projected files so all you have to do is let me know which ones you want to enter. Results and awards at the June meeting.

The June meeting will also bring elections for club officers. We will nominate and vote for President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Member at Large at the June meeting.

Auburn
Cruise
Night May
2008



Iris Hunting at Horton's

Text and Photos by Sue Barthelow

Except for the light breezes that sometimes slowed us down, our day at the Horton Iris Garden approached perfection. Six club members took advantage of the crowd-free day to wander about, sometimes competing for the best location at an eye-catching iris.



A group of spinners who had gathered for their annual garden get-together must have thought us a bit crazy as they watched now and then from their wheels. If I could draw, I would sketch out something comic. A photographer leaning over a tripod here. Another reaching out to hold a diffuser over a flower there. Someone else on knees while positioning a reflector with one hand and holding a camera up to their face with the other. Two photographers fighting over a bloom. I can see

it all in my mind's eye.

All kidding aside, it didn't matter what anybody's favorite color was. An iris of nearly every color could be found somewhere within the many growing beds. Some were simple; some were fancy. They were all there. The newly unfolded blossoms with the best color variations beckoned. Deciding where to go next was sometimes overwhelming, but we each managed to overcome the many temptations.



Hopefully, some of you who missed the outing will make it next year. You never know where your favorite image will come from.

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Beginners Corner

Your Camera's Modes

By Mike Schumacher

Your camera has different shooting modes for different situations. This month we'll take a look at some of them.

Most cameras have a simple point a shoot mode which allows for the least creativity. The camera sets most of the parameters and allows the least human intervention.

The next step up (on Canon, I'm not sure about Nikon) is a P – program mode. This still sets aperture and shutter speed but allows the user to set different relationships between aperture and shutter speed with the spin of a dial. Slower shutter speed and smaller aperture or faster shutter speed and wider aperture. Many other options can be set including choice of raw or jpg, type of metering etc. This is fine for some pictures but not all.

Three other modes allow for the most creativity.

TV - time value or shutter speed priority. In this mode the user sets the shutter speed and the camera sets the correct aperture. This is very useful when the subject is fast moving and you want to freeze it such as sports, car racing etc or you want to emphasize movement such as in a slow shutter speed to show motion in a waterfall. This is a good mode for nature photography such as fast moving critters. Using a telephoto lens often requires a fast shutter speed to prevent 'lens blur'. The use of a tripod is recommended with a telephoto but not always practical or possible. One way is to use the focal length of the lens as the shutter speed. If the focal length is 250mm use 1/250 sec or faster shutter speed.

AV – aperture value or aperture priority. In this mode the user sets the aperture and the camera sets the correct shutter speed. This can be used for creative depth of field compositions. This is a great mode for landscape and close-up photography where depth of field (or lack of it) is the main criteria. The photographer can use depth of field as well as composition to direct the viewers eye in the photograph.

M – or manual mode. This mode allows for the most control of the camera. The user sets both the aperture and shutter speed. This can be used in with the cameras metering to control all aspects of the exposure.

All 3 of these modes can be used for **night** photography.

In the **manual** mode using the cameras spot or partial metering take a reading on the area of the composition you want to emphasize and set the appropriate aperture and shutter speed. You can then re-compose your picture.

In **aperture** or **shutter** priority modes you can focus on depth of field or blur car headlights. These modes will work if there are no extremes of light. You can use the above method of metering and re-compose.

With night photography **bracketing** is very useful. Make multiple (usually 3) exposures above and below the desired exposure. That would be one exposure at the desired exposure and one above and one below.

A **tripod** is essential if you want sharp photos with slower shutter speeds.

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Notes from the Field

Text & Photos by Ardath Winterowd



When my friend Wally bought the property in 1945 that this Fig tree lives on here in Auburn, the tree was already old and gnarled. The original owners planted an orchard on the 100 acre+ property, which included the Fig, in the early part of the last century, so I'm guessing its



age is close to 100 years old, if not older. If a person 5 feet tall, stood on the right side of the tree, the top of their head would be just under the huge knot hole.

It sort of looks like an old man's hand reaching out of the ground, don't you think?

Close-ups and Portraits

Don't Let Your Background Compete for Attention

Text and Photos by Sue Barthelow

Lately, I've been taking pictures of flowers in the garden and in the wild. Flowers, close-ups and portrait images are similar beasts. The subject always looks better when the background doesn't compete with it. A distracting background can turn a great picture into a mediocre one. There are three main things that cause the background to attract attention – busyness, coloring and lighting.

Busy Backgrounds

One way to simplify a busy background is to use a wide-open aperture to throw it out of focus. There are 4 ways to do this. 1) Use your camera's portrait mode. 2) Use your camera's macro mode. 3) Use aperture priority and set it to a low number. 4) Use a macro/micro lens. If you don't know how to set and use programmed and aperture priority camera settings, check your manual or ask a fellow photographer who has a similar camera.

The more distant the background is from the subject, the easier it is to blur. If there is plenty of room between the subject and the background, you can get more depth of field for your subject by using an aperture that brings more of it into focus while still blurring the background.

Don't forget to watch out for distracting background objects that seem to grow out your subject. For example, you don't want a pole growing out of a person's head. Can't keep something out of the picture but have a digital image? Use an image editor like Photoshop and remove it using the computer.

Competing Background Colors

When you're setting your shot up, look through the viewfinder to see how background colors complement or distract from your subject. When the background colors draw your attention away from the subject or clash in color, your image will suffer. You may be able to move a little to one side to improve the background. If not, look for another subject in the case of a flower, or move your subject to another spot with a better background.

If you have a digital image, you can dull background colors using an image editor to save an otherwise good picture.

Background Lighting

Contrast between your subject and the background is necessary. A bright subject stands out better against a darker background and a dark subject stands out better in front of a lighter background.

On the other hand, high contrast in the background attracts attention and should be avoided. Bright areas within darker regions draw your eyes away from the subject. Try to compose your shot to minimize bright areas in a dark background. The same holds true for dark areas within lighter regions. You can darken or lighten background areas in a digital image using an image editor.

Example Photos

Notice how the poppy photo improves by getting closer to the flowers to simplify the image and then slightly blurring the background. The image improves even more when going closer and filling the frame with fewer flowers while keeping some of the foliage as a background.



Although an interesting image, the iris picture with the light and dark background shows how a background can compete with the subject. Moving to another flower, the dark background allows the subject to command all attention.



Swap Shop

FOR SALE

Matt Cutter \$20

Tripod \$5

Contact Judy Hooper 530-888-8308

If you want to sell or are looking for photography related items members can list them in the newsletter or on the club website. Email or call me. Listings are free for members. Mike 530-367-4505 radioman@ftcnet.net

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Huey Monitor Calibration

The club has a Huey monitor calibration system for use by club members. Contact Judy Hooper to 'check out' Huey. 530-888-8308.

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**Tony M
@
Table
Mountain**



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Calendar of Events

May

20th – Camera Club Meeting –

Placer Camera Club Webpage

Check out the Placer Camera Club webpage. Webmaster Sue Barthelow has been doing a fantastic job! Thanks Sue!

<http://www.placercameraclub.org>

→ *Please feel free to contact me with items for the newsletter!*

Mike Schumacher (Newsletter) 530-367-4505 radioman@ftcnet.net

See you at the meeting May 20th at 7 PM!!