

THE NEWSLETTER THAT FOCUSES ON PHOTOGRAPHERS IN THE FOOTHILLS

PLACER COLOR



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PLACER COLOR

The President's Corner

The meeting this month is May 16th, 6:30 pm at the Auburn library.

At our May meeting, we will have Theme Night. The Theme is 'Leading Lines'. Theme Night is where we submit 1 image each and discuss them as a group. There are no other categories this month. Send your 1 Theme image to placercameraclub@gmail.com before May 16th.

Tony Hallas will give a presentation on What is Art? In June, we will have Print Image Critiques. Get your prints ready, more info to follow.

Our webmaster Dennis Morgan has done quite a bit of upgrading to our website and he has more work planned. Check it out at <http://placercameraclub.org/> Our refreshment committee is Judy Hooper and Ardath Winterowd. We will need club members to bring goodies for our meetings. There is a signup sheet for this purpose. See one of the committee members.

The club has a Facebook group page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/922657154461718/>

Mike Schumacher
President Placer Camera Club



Featured This Month

- President's Corner
- Beach Panning 101
- Carrizo Plain National Monment
- A Wet Spring In Sierra Valley

Come To The Next PCC Meeting



The Placer Camera Club meets the third Tuesday of each month except August. The meetings are held in the Beecher Room of the Placer County Library. 350 Nevada Street, Auburn, Ca.

Visitors are always welcome.

The meeting starts at 6:30 PM.

**The Next PCC Meeting
will be on Tuesday May 16th**

"SEE YOU THERE"



BEACH PANNING 101

By Carol Smith

I love to photograph birds. I especially love to photograph shore birds. A few months ago, I tried a type of bird photography I thought I'd never try because it seemed so ridiculous and had the potential for disaster written all over it. I didn't want to do it. In fact, I refused to do it...at first.

So, what is this technique with such a potential for disaster? I call it Beach Panning, where you and your camera are on the sand at the same level as the birds you're photographing. I was fearful about the very distinct likelihood that I would dump my camera and 600mm lens onto the sand causing damage that would result in very costly repairs to my equipment. I wondered how could splaying yourself flat onto the sand result in any better photographs than you could get from atop a perfectly respectable tripod. I quickly learned that this change in perspective makes a huge difference.

So, why did I try this "potentially disastrous" technique? It was mentioned as a part of a Moose Peterson workshop I was attending in Texas last November. But, I had watched a Moose Peterson video about the technique a few years ago and had decided then I'd never try it so I didn't even bother to get the panning plate needed. In the vehicle on the way to our first destination I told Moose I was not going to do it. Period.

The next morning, with my Nikon D5 and Nikkor 600mm lens securely atop my tripod, I was happily photographing willets and sanderlings skittering along the edge of the surf when Moose approached me with his panning plate attached to a Frisbee. "Carol, I want you to try this," he said. I probably paled and I know my stomach did flip flops. I watched in silent horror as Moose removed my camera and lens from the tripod and affixed them to his panning plate. Then he leaned down and placed my camera and lens, now attached to his panning plate resting in a Frisbee, on the sand. To my amazement, it was perfectly balanced and I could see there was very little chance that it would fall over. And so I was introduced to the magic of Beach Panning.

Here's what you'll need to try it yourself.

- Camera
- Long lens (the longer the better) with a collar and foot
- Panning plate with low profile (I use Visual Echoes Panning Plate -PP-1)
- Frisbee
- Towel
- Tripod (Keep your tripod nearby as a staging area; remove camera and lens from the tripod, then attach to panning plate/Frisbee. When you're ready to pack it up, remove the camera and lens from the panning plate/Frisbee and reattach it to your tripod. Then you can safely remove your camera from the lens and remove the lens from the tripod.

The next hurdle is getting down onto the sand without getting any sand on your hands, the camera gear's mortal enemy. First, you have to kneel down. Next, you have to put your elbows down in the sand keeping your hands in the air...at this point, you need to abandon all decorum and dignity, but trust me, it is worth the potential embarrassment. Then you can either stretch out flat or stay in a sort of kneeling version of the Yoga position known as a downward-facing-dog. So, you can even get in a little exercise while you're at it.



BEACH PANNING 101

By Carol Smith Continued

Remember, don't touch the sand! Keep a towel handy (affixed to a nearby tripod or tucked into the back of your waistband protected from sand) to dust off any sand that might get on your hands. When you pick up the camera be careful not to hug it to your body because there is moist sand stuck to your shirt and pants because you've been laying in it. And, don't have anything in your pockets because you have to assume you'll get wet.

Camera Settings:

- **Aperture Priority** with the widest aperture for the lens you're using
- **Lowest ISO** (100 if possible) that returns a shutter speed of 1/125 or faster
- **Auto Area AF**
- **Auto White Balance**

It's still important to use proper long lens technique to steady the lens and avoid blurry photos so keep your left hand on the lens, either on top or support it from underneath. One of the most difficult aspects of Beach Panning is maintaining a level horizon. The lens collar has a knob that loosens to allow for clockwise and counter clockwise movement of the lens so while you're constantly panning back and forth as the subjects move, at the same time you're adjusting the camera's level. It is a real challenge to keep the subject in the viewfinder at the correct angle, with good composition, with good light, and with an uncluttered background, but practice helps. • Uncluttered backgrounds and foregrounds are critical; other birds and people walking by can ruin a shot; uneven sand can be a blurry intrusion;

- The light should come from behind you so the birds are front lit, not back lit;
- The composition should be pleasing; try to keep the subject out of the middle of the frame;
- Try to keep the horizon level.

Shore birds seem to acclimate quickly if you're fairly still. They may run off at first but if you're patient they'll return and reward you with desirable poses. The Frisbee allows you to push the camera rig atop the sand, so you can get closer to your subject. You have to do this slowly while on your knees inching forward and shoving the gear ahead of you. Then, get back into your desired shooting position. All beaches are not alike. Some beaches are smooth and sandy; others are strewn with shells. Kneeling on the shells, is painful! Knee pads can help.

Beach Panning has become one of my favorite techniques and I now look for opportunities to do it.



Panning Plate



Camera, Lens & Frisbee

BEACH PANNING 101

By Carol Smith Continued



WN-Preening Willet



Sanderling On Sand



Dunling Feeding On The Gulf



Semipalmated Plover



Great Turn Out For Carol's Presentation.

CARRIZO PLAIN NATIONAL MONUMENT**By Bruce Gregory**

This year the blogs and news were full of a Southern California "Superbloom". The Carrizo Plain was mentioned as one of the hot spots. Apparently the peak of the bloom was around April 1st this year, a bit earlier than usual. I wasn't able to leave town until April 11, I missed the height of the bloom, but still had 5 good days in the National Monument of exploring and photography.

The Carrizo Plain National Monument is located about 1/2 way between I5 at Buttonwillow and Highway 101 at Santa Margarita along Highway 58. It's about 50 miles in from either I5 or Hwy 101. From Auburn it's about a 5 hour drive to either junction with Hwy 58. There is no gas or other services in the monument. Fill your tank before you leave the main highway. The southern entrance to the monument is near Maricopa and Taft on Hwy 33, there is gas and motels in Maricopa and Taft. There are two campgrounds in the monument.

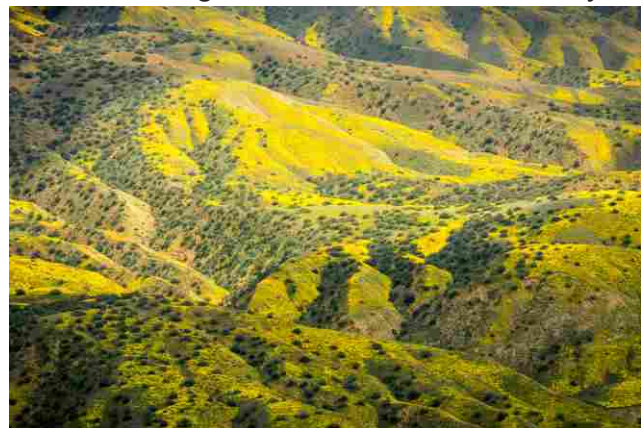
The Monument is near California Valley about 50 miles long and up to 15 miles wide enclosed by two mountain ranges, The Caliente Mountains to the west and Temblor Mountains to the East. There are two main north/south roads, Soda Lake Rd on the west where you'll find some pavement part way into the park, the Visitor's Center (Thurs-Sun), and the 2 campgrounds. Elkhorn Rd to the east which is mostly a good dirt road. The San Andreas fault runs parallel to Elkhorn Rd at the base of the Temblor Range.

Midway down the monument there are two roads that climb the mountains and run along the ridge tops. Both are dirt, in decent shape, a bit of ground clearance helps but there were small sedans being carefully driven on those roads. They are narrow, curvy, and steep in spots, if you meet another vehicle someone will back up. Hurricane Rd is on the east, and on the west the road leaves the Selby Campground Rd about 4 miles from Soda Lake Rd to the right of the only barn along the way, it almost looks like a driveway, but it is the road up to the ridge. The views and flowers up there make it worth the careful drive.

I was there during a Spring Break week. I found that people tended to cluster down on the flat plain and here there were large fields of flowers. For the most part people stayed at the edges of the flowers. but some had to get their selfie sticks & get out in the fields, fortunately they usually didn't go too far into the flowers. Avoiding those trails of crushed flowers it was not too hard to photo pristine views. Because of Spring Break the campgrounds were pretty full, but they turned over early in the day and there was a mellow spirit of sharing tables, etc. prevailing. The site I was in I got by asking to share & shared it for the 5 nights I was there. Away from the areas where the crowds seemed to cluster you had a lot of area to yourself and still lots of good photography.

It's too late this year, but if the Southern San Joaquin Valley gets a lot of winter rain watch the blogs for Carrizo Plain & go.. this was supposed to be a good year, but not as good as some other recent years according to experienced visitors.

[BLM California: Carrizo Plain National Monument](#)



Carrizo Plain_Caliente Range Canyon

CARRIZO PLAIN NATIONAL MONUMENT

By Bruce Gregory Continued



Carrizo Plain_Temblor Range_Hurricane Ridge Rd. Traffic.



Carrizo Plain_Caliente Range Hills View



Carrizo Plain_Caliente Range Lacy Phacelia Desert Candles



Carrizo Plain_Monolopia Artist



Carrizo Plain_Monolopia



Carrizo Plain_Temblor Range



A WET SPRING IN SIERRA VALLEY

By Jim White

May 6, 2017 in Sierra Valley, was showers in the morning, rain in the afternoon with heavy snow flurries on the passes going home. So what's new! There is so much water in the valley the Shore birds are having a problem finding a dry spot to nest. The sun flowers are out foregrounding the ranches which provide the best landscape shots this spring.

The valley is always alive with wildlife. We saw Sandhill Cranes, water fowl scattered everywhere, Pelicans, nesting songbirds, hawks, and there are always nesting Bitterns near the Feather River bridge on Marble Hot Springs road.

My wonderful action shots of the pair of Bitterns was ruined by a single switch in the wrong position on the Tamron lens, but what the heck. Where can you beat that wonderful clean air in your lungs, our eyes flushed by the rain, and the really good Tostada at the Mex joint in Sierraville. We are waiting for the next storm so we can go back.



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From Your Newsletter Editor



All PCC members if you haven't contributed to the **PCC Newsletter** now is a good time to do it. Let us hear from you. I need material submitted to me in order to produce a quality newsletter.

I would like your feedback on the new PCC Newsletter layout. I thought it was time for a change. Drop me an [e-mail](#).



When you submit an article for the PCC Newsletter please try to keep it at 150 words in length and if you have photos that accompany your article please try and send no more than three photos. If your article warrants more than three photos to maintain the impact I can make exceptions on a case-by-case basis. Please put "PCC Newsletter" in the subject field when you make your submissions.

Jim Cormier
Your PCC Newsletter Editor

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Huey Monitor Calibration

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for use by the members.

TO CHECK IT OUT

Contact Judy Hooper • 530-888-8308

Members who contributed articles
and photographs for this months

PCC newsletter.

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Jim White

