

placer color

Newsletter of the Placer Camera Club



Year 47 Number 8

PO Box 4990, Auburn, Ca. 95603

September 2009

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<http://www.placercameraclub.org>

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

This month's meeting will be Tuesday **Sept 15th**. Informal gathering at **6:30** with the meeting starting **promptly** at **7 PM**.

This month.....

We will have an **HDR** (high dynamic range) presentation by **Albert De Bruijn**. Albert will lead you through a very easy to understand exploration of hdr photography.

Tony Middleton will give a presentation on the category definitions for our image evaluations.

Judy Hooper will present a short slide show on Death Valley.

Richard Myren & Howard Godfrey will show us the right and wrong ways to use a telephoto lens. How to make yourself stable and get sharper images.

Member dues are due this month. \$25 single, \$40 married couple, \$15 student under 18. See Judy Hooper at the meeting or mail a check to POB 4990, Auburn, Ca, 95603.

Starting in **December** the **club** will be **displaying images** in the Beacher room at the library for 6 weeks. Each member can hang one image up to 16 inches wide. Images must have wire on the back and be ready to hang. They can be framed, on gator board, canvas gallery wrap, etc. Bring your finished work to the December meeting. They must be presentable and ready to hang.

At the **December** meeting we would like to have members present a short slide show. Put together a very short **show** of no more than 20 images or so and a time length of no more than 5 to 8 minutes. The subject can be anything you want but the show should have a theme. Narration is optional, you can have music or silence with your images. In addition the December meeting is our annual cookie exchange.

Event Calendar

September 15

Monthly meeting.
Hdr Presentation
Death Valley Images.

October 20

Monthly meeting
Projected image
evaluations

November 17

Monthly meeting
Print evaluations

December 15

Monthly meeting
Christmas cookie
exchange

January 19

Monthly meeting
Projected image
evaluations

*See last page for club
officers & commitees*

A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO OBSERVING/PHOTOGRAPHING WILDLIFE

By Jim L White

It is August 6th 2009 and it has been a hot dry Sacramento Valley summer. One of my wife Shirley and my number one pleasures in retirement is to watch and photograph wildlife. Of course all the waterfowl have gone north, all the mammals don't come out during the hot valley daytime so what are we to do? We want to go see some wildlife and are willing to settle for just a shot of a jackrabbit or maybe a good close-up of a Red-winged Blackbird but we want to see some wildlife!

Well it is 10:00 AM on this Thursday but we put into practice our number one rule, **GO WHERE THERE SHOULD BE SOME WILDLIFE**". But it is the wrong time of day is it not? How can you see any wildlife during the middle of the day? Easy, we do it all the time by practicing rule number one, **GO WHERE THERE SHOULD BE SOME WILDLIFE!** You will never see any wildlife by staying home and wishing you could get out at 5 AM and that the birds were down from the north. To see wildlife you have to get out there and spend some time in the wildlife hotspots. You have to also learn how to sit still and watch. You have to become a hunter of wildlife.



When I retired, I worked three winters in the Sierra running 12 baited remote cameras placed from Weber Lake to Sonora Pass, trying to get the first ever pictures taken of a Wolverine in California. We spent \$150,000 in equipment and in training resource agencies to do the job, and used \$50,000 worth of PG&E donated helicopter time and we failed to get a Wolverine picture or even to see one. One year after the program ended while on horseback with 14 other people we saw a Wolverine run across the trail in front of us near Coyote Creek in Alpine Co. The time was 12:00 noon! Two years after that George Wurst from Truckee and I saw another Wolverine digging up a

ground squirrel about two miles from the first sighting. The time was 12:15 pm, during the heat of the day. During the last week of July of this year with the temperature at 103 degrees we watched a very large Golden Eagle sitting in a snag on Coon Creek, near Brewer road in Placer Co. Oh by the way it was 1:30 pm. We photographed a two- year old Black Bear in July of this year near Robinson Flat east of Foresthill at exactly 12 noon. We watched this bear tear logs apart for over ½ hour. My point is that some of our best wildlife sightings have been in the middle of the day. The reason we were successful is that we were out there looking.



On the August 6th trip of this year we arrived at the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge at about 12 noon and started our trip around the auto tour route. Our rule #2 is to drive (or walk) very slow. I mean you should drive the auto tour route at no faster speed than 5mph! I pull over all the time to let people pass on this wildlife auto tour route who drive at 10-15 mph. You cannot see wildlife driving that fast. On this trip we photographed a doe with a fawn and a jackrabbit in the first 15 minutes of the drive. All of the seasonal ponds were dry and barren. Do not let this discourage you. We went directly to the

observation platform overlooking the water supply ditch, took our photo gear and binoculars and sat down, looking toward the water areas. Rule #3. You need to shut up and do not talk. This is NOT a social trip. We are here to see and photograph wildlife and we communicate with short whispers and sign language. You need to sit still and not move around. In fact, do not move your arms or body quickly at any time. Rule # 4. Wear non- color full clothing. Tan or brown or even green is O.K. Pants can be blue jeans if you wish. If you have a cameo shirt or parka, that is the very best. Bright colors and quick moves will alarm wildlife that may be near and even though you do not see them, THEY SEE AND HEAR YOU! Wear a hat. What usually spooks wildlife is seeing your arm move, hearing you talk, or the movement of your head.

It's O.K. to drink liquids or eat a snack but do it slowly with as little motion as you can. Hunters call what we were doing as being on a "stand". It is a hiding place (if you do not move). The animals in the area are used to the viewing platform and pay no attention to it, if there are no sounds or movement. While we were in the viewing platform we saw more than 100 Black Crowned Night Herons, (I got 13 good pictures), several Great Blue Herons, (I don't shoot GBH's anymore), several Pelicans, a doe jumped off the bank into the stream 20 feet away from us and scared us to death. A Blue- Winged Teal swam up the stream jumping up off the water to strip seeds off the overhanging grass along the bank. A female Raccoon with two young walked along the bank and played around in front of us for at least ½ hour. My pictures show her nipples being very full and I think the babies wanted to nurse. One was jumping up and patting mom in the face. She heard our shutters going off and knew something was not right. The refuge personnel ran their air-boat up and down the permanent pond nearby and really stirred up lots of waterfowl we did not know was there. Only one car arrived and stopped to use our lookout this Thursday afternoon and they came up to chat and talk about everything they saw. It is hard to be friendly when you are on a wildlife stand. They saw the GBH's and an egret or two, committed about the lack of birds on the refuge and left. Five minutes later a Green Heron landed on the old log in the stream 30 feet away. A flycatcher continued to catch the emerging insects from the stream and land on a nearby limb with the bugs hanging out of his mouth. Remember, a wildlife refuge is not a zoo! The animals are not on display in cages. They are wild and are free to move around and to hide. You can't just drive around the route and see many animals, at least not in the summer.

By 3:00PM we were tired and we had shot about 200 exposures or more, so it was time to drive the rest of the route. We drove about 1/4th mile and I spotted a hen pheasant standing still in a clearing between some tulles. This is August and I wondered where her brood was? I saw a male ring- neck peek out from

the tulles but we sat still and waited. I glanced in the rear-view mirror and saw a white pick-up waiting behind us, but parked somewhat back. I saw the government plate on the truck and went back to watching the hen. The Fish and Wildlife employee in the truck knew what we were doing and was willing to wait. Here they come out of the tulles, four young “fryer sized” chicks pecking around Mom while she stood and watched us. A couple of minutes later the show was over and I pulled over to let the U.S.F&W truck go by. He smiled and waved. It was one of our best wildlife days for sure.



Notes from the Field

by Ardath Winterowd

This photo of the spotter plane I’ve circled in the huge smoke cloud of the recent Auburn “49 Fire”, gives you an idea of how big the fire was and just exactly what was burning. As everyone knows by now, it wasn’t just burning brush and timber but also houses and other structures, as evidenced from the black smoke. This photo was taken in back of Home Depot on my way to my Mom’s condo/duplex on Atwood and Corral near the Catholic church. I was taking 5 boxes of photos/negatives, my portable media safe, external computer drive and camera equipment there for safe keeping.



This second photo is of the black plume that resulted a split second after I heard a loud roaring sound and felt the ground shake from a propane tank exploding. (Note the spotter plane I’ve circled.) I took this photo across from the DeWitt Center on Bell Road as we were being evacuated.

My neighbors and I are very thankful that the fire didn’t reach us! I hope everyone else in the camera club was as fortunate as well.

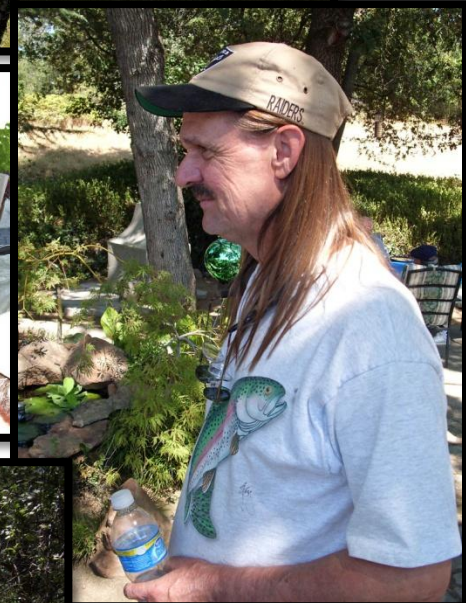
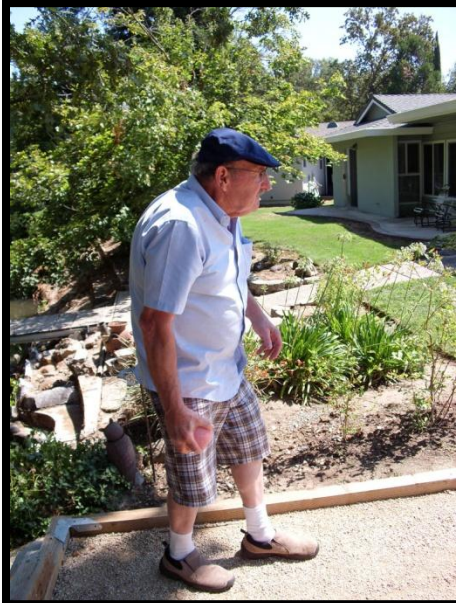
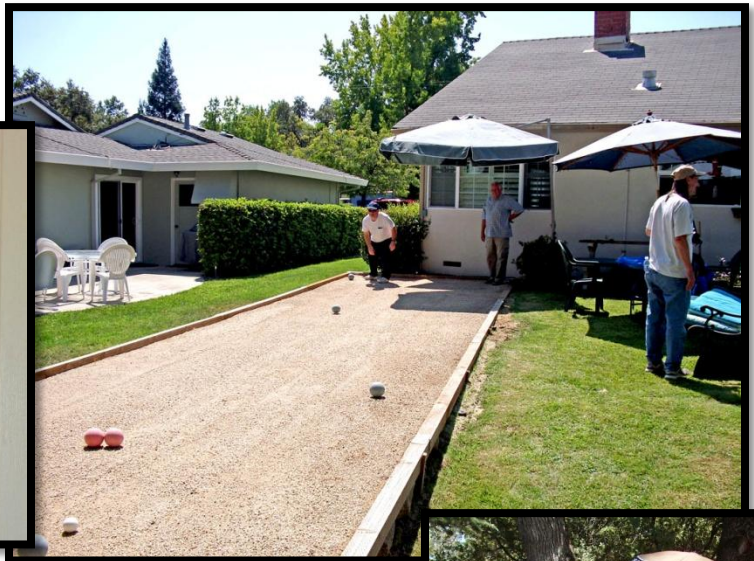
— Ardath Winterowd

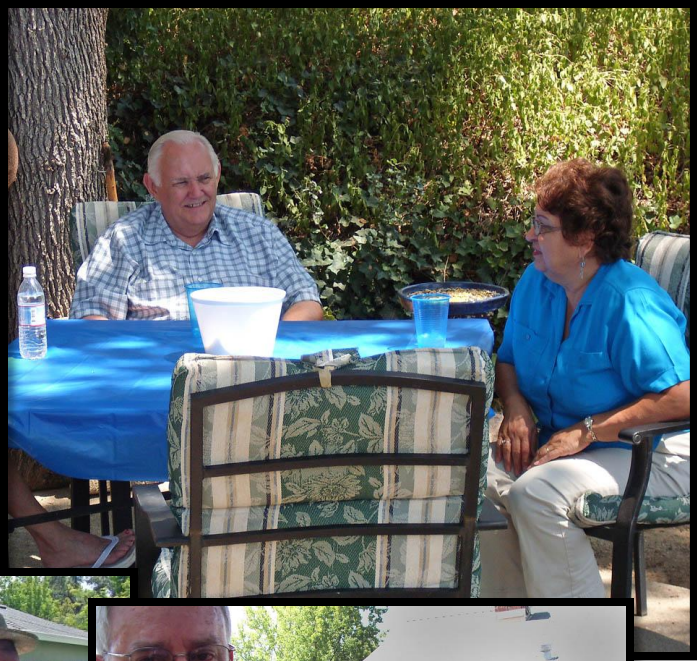


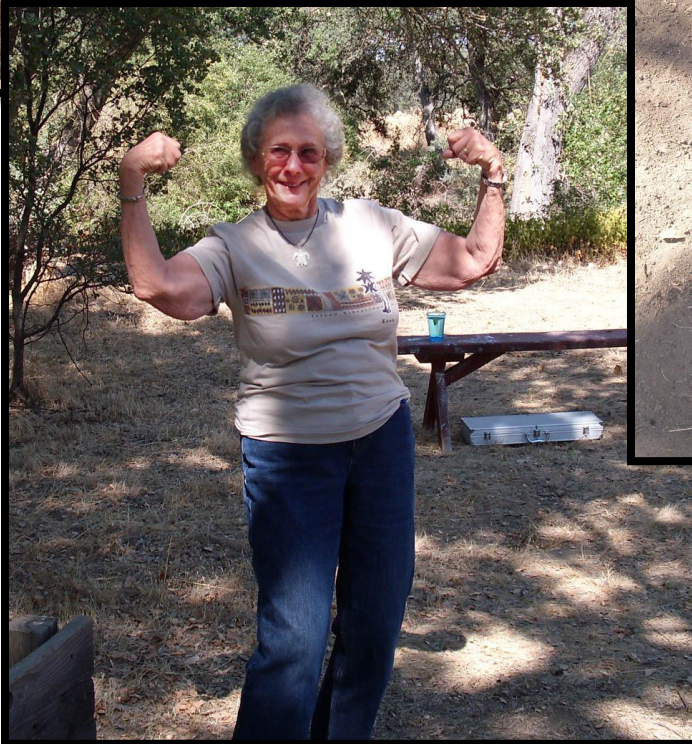
Annual Club Picnic

by Mike Schumacher

This year we had our annual picnic at Tony & Kristi Middleton's house. A good time was had by all playing Bocce Ball, Horseshoes and Shuffle Board. We took a hike down the creek to the beaver dam where Shirley found a giant mystery feather. Lots and lots of good food and Kristi did a great job grilling the burgers and hotdogs. Shirley got a ringer in horseshoes and as you can see from the photos she is rightfully proud. Bob Boughton proved to be pretty proficient at Bocce Ball. All in all a great picnic. Don't miss next years!







For Sale:

Epson Stylus Photo 1280 13 inch, wide format inkjet photo printer. \$75

Mike 530-367-4505 radioman@ftcnet.net

WHAT JUDGES LOOK FOR IN PHOTOS

You're probably wondering why we pick one image over another; there actually are some simple rules of photography we look for in each photo. Common mistakes are:

- (1) A photo out of focus, either the whole photo or part of it in an important location such as the bottom front of the print
- (2) Too much "clutter" in the picture. We want our attention to go directly to the subject, not see a lot of competing, but not necessary, clutter around it.
- (3) Exposure - is the picture too light or too dark to easily see the subject.
- (4) Poor lighting, a "flat" image where rocks, subject, sky, etc. all blend together without different shadows, colors, etc. or the opposite where the sun might bleach out the lighter parts of the image, giving no texture to those areas.

There are other more subtle criteria we look for; placement of the subject, size of the subject within the image, etc. but the 4 listed above are the first and foremost most commonly seen, easily correctible problems that usually cause a photo to be eliminated.

For more specific guidelines, please feel free to drop in on any of our Placer Camera Club meetings and ask questions! We have meetings the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 at the Beecher Room in the Library off Nevada Street. We have short programs, critique our own images, have "how-to" presentations and to end it all, great desserts!!!



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Placer Camera Club Webpage

Check out the Placer Camera Club webpage.

<http://placercameraclub.org>

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*Don't forget our tutorials webpage. It's
at:*

<http://www.placercameraclub.org/tutorials/index.html>

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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.

