



The Newsletter of E.J. Peiker - Nature and Travel Photography

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Western Himalayas - India (a7R IV, 100-400mm)

## COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Induced Business Changes

For a large majority of my nearly 60 years on Planet Earth, I have traveled the world. At age 8 my family moved from Germany to the USA and ever since graduating from college, I have traveled extensively. There has not been a single year since 1983 where I did not engage in foreign travel. My first career as an engineer, and later as a senior manager for one of the world's largest technology companies took me all over the planet starting from my first year with the company. I had to routinely travel to the middle east, Asia, Europe, as well as domestically. After my retirement in 2010 and taking my photo business from a part-time "weekend warrior" endeavor to a full time, 80 hour a week endeavor, I have visited at least 5 foreign countries every single year, often quite a few more. This has allowed me to visit every continent multiple times, visited over 60 countries world-wide, amassed over 3 million flying miles, and offers an extremely diverse portfolio of landscapes, wildlife, and travel photographs to my clientele. I had a full slate of international travel planned for 2020 including India, Scotland, Denmark, Faroe Islands, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Colombia, and Costa Rica. This is in addition to domestic travel and it doesn't even count my typical one to two foreign, non-photographic vacations. Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has cancelled all travel plans for the first half of the year. I did make it to the Himalayas of Northern India prior to travel restrictions going into place. The feeling of loss is huge, far beyond the financial hit I have taken due to the cancellations. I am almost beside myself not researching, preparing or packing for the next trip, which has become such a large part of my life and my business – the sense of loss is palpable. I am not complaining, just sad. I have led a life of privilege and means far beyond most and hope to continue to be able to experience so much of the world. Our planet would be a much better and more understanding place if more people were able to experience other places and cultures. I hope to be able to continue international travel safely soon but for now I feel sadness and loss. Perhaps I should use this time to finally write my next book, one that has been on the drawing boards for some time, but in order to do that well, one needs a very positive frame of mind. I'm not there yet! Let's hope the world gets through this pandemic quickly, safely, with minimal loss of life and lets hope that the recession that it is bound to cause is not too deep and that businesses, especially the hospitality and transportation industries, which my business is so dependent on and is hit very hard by this, rebounds quickly with as few bankruptcies as possible.

I have, for the foreseeable future suspended both my camera/lens calibration business and my memory card data recovery business. Both of these businesses force me to handle a large amount of gear, packing materials, cases, surfaces, etc.. that are not mine or have not been in my control. Since this virus has been shown to live as long as 3 to 9 days on some hard surfaces like plastics, glass and metal, it is simply not safe to handle this much gear and also not safe for my customers should I be infected and be asymptomatic. I have also cancelled all public appearances and private one on one workshops scheduled through May and will reassess at that time.



Western Himalayas - India (a7R IV, 100-400mm)

## Western Himalayas Trip Report

In late February and early March, I went to India for the first time on a quest to photograph Snow Leopards and landscapes in the Western Himalayas of northern India. The total trip was two weeks long and started with back to back overnight flights; first a 10 hour British Airways Boeing 787 flight from Phoenix to London and then an 8.5 hour BA Boeing 777 flight from London to Delhi. The routing for the flight was from London across the English Channel and then over Belgium, Germany, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, across the Black Sea, over Georgia, Azerbaijan, across the Caspian Sea, over Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

I went with a small group of photographers, 2 of which were on my Greenland trip last year, one that I knew online and two that I had not previously met. All of the photographers except one were from the American West (AZ, MT, UT, WA, and WY) and, as such, we all had extensive mountain experience but were lodging as high as the highest points in the lower 48 states so there was a bit of apprehension about the possibilities of altitude sickness. Due to this, I went for 5 days to Colorado to train at higher elevations prior to departing on this trip. The final participant was from the western border of Germany with experience in the Alps.

Upon landing in Delhi, India, I was picked up by a representative for Frozen Himalayas, the Indian wilderness tour operator responsible for our logistics and guiding in the mountains. After a night in the Radisson Blu Hotel near the Delhi airport and meeting the group for dinner, we departed for the Delhi airport at 4:00AM for a 6:30 AM flight to Leh, Ladakh in the northernmost part of India along the China border on an Air India A320.

We arrived in Leh, Ladakh at 8:00AM, after the craziest visual approach through the mountains with peaks well over 20,000 feet (6100 meters) on both sides. I would hate to see what the instrument approach for this looks like... We had to go through coronavirus screening including paperwork documenting our whereabouts for the last two weeks as well as getting our temperature taken. I was my usual colder than normal 97.5F. We were then taken to the Grand Dragon Hotel in Leh (pop. 31,000), the largest city in the Ladakh Province; a surprisingly good hotel for an area this remote. After getting settled we walked about the market in town and had a delicious traditional Indian lunch in a very small restaurant in the market. Afterwards, we did a little street photography in the marketplace but this is not my sort of thing. I find it way too intrusive and absolutely would not want it done to me. It is a genre of photography that I have ethical problems with so I didn't really partake other than a few shots from a bit of a distance.

The view of the western Himalayas from the hotel was spectacular and we obtained permission to go on the roof of the hotel for a sunset shoot of the mountains, one of which is over 24,000 feet (7300 meters) high, about 4000 feet (1200 meters) higher than the highest mountain in all of North America (Mount McKinley/Denali).

At dawn, the next morning, I photographed the spectacular 21,000 foot (6400 meters) peaks visible from my room – a bit cold with the window open but some beautiful pink light. Breakfast was followed by a visit to the Snow Leopard Conservation organization where we learned about the conservation and education efforts that have returned this wild cat from near extinction at farmer's hands through education and mitigative steps for their livestock. Next, we visited a Buddhist monastery east of Leh which offered up some interesting photography of both the monastery itself as well as some of the worship rooms and the inner workings of the monastery. I got one of my favorite photos of the trip of a monk preparing lunch – he encouraged the photography!





Thicksey Monastery - India (a7R IV, 28-75mm)

After the monastery we made a valiant attempt at some bird photography, but everything was very skittish, something that was a precursor of things to come. Almost anything non-human is extremely skittish, we are talking 1km plus flee zone skittish! At the end of the day we went to a high promontory above Leh which allowed us to photograph the mountains again as well as a Buddhist Monument called Shanti Stupa which was erected in 1991 to celebrate 2500 years of Buddhism. The primary religions in this part of India are Buddhism and Muslimism and the two get along very well and even coordinate prayer time with one another proving that it is possible for two vastly different religions to cohabitate peacefully.

The journey into the remote Western Himalayas in search of Wildlife and landscapes began on the 6<sup>th</sup> day since leaving Phoenix. We drove for about 3 hours on largely unimproved and very rough high mountain roads to Ullay (also written as Uley, Ulley, and Ulay depending on which sign you read), a small settlement of just 40 people in very remote Ladakh with a small lodge called the Snow Leopard Lodge. Due to it being winter there is no running water and the only heat comes from a small wood burning stove. I'm very glad I brought my sleeping bag suit which kept me warm during the night and even allowed me to walk in the nlodge since the temperature in the rooms drop from about 60 degrees to about 40 degrees by the time you wake up and temperatures in the hallways can be as low as the freezing level. Unfortunately, the fire in my wood burning stove went out during dinner so my room was brutally cold for this first night at over 13K.

As we are now well above 13,000 feet (4000 meters), we did not exert ourselves on the first day but did spot a large herd of Ibex. Unfortunately, they were too far for any photographs – they were at spotting scope distance and even then, very tiny in the scope. I did get some nice sunset shots of the Himalayas.

The next morning, I got up early to capture first light on the mountains and got some gorgeous pink light at dawn enveloping the 22,000 foot peaks. After breakfast we went on our first game drive and were able to photograph a Ladakh Urial father and son at frame filling range using a 600mm f/4 with 2x converter and shooting an APS-C mode for an effective focal length of 1800mm. We spotted numerous other Urials at long range but so far, the holy grail, the Snow Leopard has eluded us. The late afternoon quest for wildlife was a total bust – we saw absolutely nothing.



Ladakh Urial - India (a7R IV, 600mm + 2x)

Between dusk and dinner, I figured out how to wash my hair and towel bathe my body with just a bucket of luke-warm water. On this evening, I was able to keep my wood burning stove going strong until bedtime, so it didn't get nearly as cold in the on this second night.

The next morning, I had a plan to do a 1 kilometer pre-dawn hike to a spot I noticed earlier where I could photograph the mountains through a v-shaped valley and got all bundled and geared up in the dark just to find it all clouded over with a fresh layer of snow on the ground. Snow is good though as it makes it much easier to spot Snow Leopard tracks. Each morning the scouts at the Snow Leopard Lodge go out searching for wildlife so that after breakfast, we have a higher probability of finding something on our game drive – did I mention the wildlife in India is the most skittish I have ever seen anywhere in the world. I am so glad I rented a 600 f/4 and 2x teleconverter rather than just relying on my 200-600 f/6.3 which, as most zooms, does not mate well with a 2x teleconverter due to the small apertures that result, especially since stopping down a bit with the TC is essential for maximum sharpness. I have found that the sweet spot for the 600 f/4 with teleconverter (resulting in a 1200mm f/8 optic) is at f/11. It softens up considerably wide open and shutter speeds get pretty slow if you go to f/16 as well as diffraction creeping in to lower resolution.

Our game drive today yielded several photographable Ladakh Urials, a high mountain sheep. We also spotted an Ibex grouping that was well beyond 1 kilometer which is not photographable due to heat



waves and atmospheric interference, not to mention very tiny in the frame, even on a spotting scope. The quest for Snow Leopard continued but there hasn't even been the slightest sign of one and at this point I no longer believed that we would have an opportunity to photograph them. According to our spotters, a good sighting is considered to be a cat that is 1 to 1.5km away which is not something you can photograph with any level of detail, especially in the sun where heat shimmer at that distance will ruin any photo. Only incredible luck will get you something that is even ¼ of the frame with 1800mm of equivalent focal length which would require a shooting distance of less than 500 meters. Only 2 in 10 trips get this sort of opportunity. It continued to snow off and on through the day which made it a bit warmer than the previous days and led to an excellent storm clearing at sunset mountain shoot. On the 9<sup>th</sup> day of our adventure, I got out while it was still relatively dark and hiked about a kilometer to a curve in the road to the spot that I had planned on photographing the previous morning. It provides a better "leading line" foreground to the most attractive peak in the visible part of the mountain chain in our area than the view from the Snow Leopard Lodge. I was not disappointed although it was bitter cold, about 9 degrees Fahrenheit, with a bit of wind easily taking the wind chill factor to zero or below. While the hike down was easy, coming back at an elevation of over 13,000 feet (4000 meters) going uphill the entire way laden with equipment made for a good early morning workout.



Western Himalayas - India (a7R IV, 100-400mm)

When I got back for breakfast, we got word that there was hope for a Snow Leopard as there were tracks right through the property our lodge sits on but again, we did not have a sighting on this day. It was actually our worst day so far from a wildlife perspective. We went to a place where Pikas are usually seen and we did see one but as is the case with every living thing here, it was too skittish to get a decent photo. Next, we went up to an even higher elevation to a place that frequently produces good bird photography. Not a single bird was seen! By this time I pretty much wrote off the wildlife aspect of this trip and started pursuing it primarily as a landscape trip. As such, I passed on the daily afternoon ritual of sitting atop an elevated area searching for wildlife with spotting scopes that at best would yield wildlife a kilometer or much more away. Instead I got one of our drivers to take me to a different location about a half hour away where I noticed a beautiful mountain scape on two occasions while driving by but never during the right time of day. I had an enjoyable hour of photography through the golden hour and into the blue hour of the spectacular mountains. I made friends with my driver Dorjay who I rode with for every outing for the rest of the trip. He didn't speak much English and I only speak about 3 words of Ladakhi, but we made it work. I made it back just in time to join our small group for dinner, a traditional Ladakhi meal that was excellent. Overall, every meal in India has been truly outstanding – it is heaven

for the vegetarian. Along with Mediterranean food, Indian (and Ladakhi) food are my favorite cuisines in the world.

Another early morning shoot of the mountain range visible from the Leopard Lodge starting pre-dawn was in the offing the next day. I think I was the only one that made it out at dawn this morning. It is always nice to have a cup of hot Assam Tea with hot milk delivered to my room and a fire burning in my wood burning stove when I get back from my dawn shoot at around 7:15AM. The folks at the lodge are really mindful of the individual habits of each guest and cater to our individual tastes and ways of doing things. I always had a cup of Assam Black Tea made with hot milk delivered between 7:15 and 7:30 and if I got back after the tea delivery, they left it on my wood burning stove to keep it warm. Writing all of my RAW files to two cards in camera paid off this morning. I had noticed that early in the trip I had three image files with a pink line through them on the card in Slot 1 but since I record everything to both SD card slots in my Sony a7R IV, I was able to retrieve a good copy of the effected images from the in camera duplicate on SD Card 2. It didn't happen often and only manifested itself on the first two days and I had largely forgotten it by this point in the trip. On this morning; however, the camera would not initialize on start-up and said a message that there is a problem with the card in Slot 1. I took the card out and put it in my ProGrade card reader and it was able to read it fine but since the camera couldn't I decided to low level format the SD card. After a half hour of trying, my computer said that it could not format the card. This is the first SD card failure I have ever had, a Lexar 128GB UHS II card. Had I not had the backup, a panorama sequence would have been destroyed since one corrupted image was right in the middle of the sequence. For those with cameras with two slots, I recommend you set the camera to write everything to both slots and not using Slot 2 as overflow but rather as a duplicate. For those with cameras with just one slot, make your next camera one with two slots!



Ladakh Urial - India (a7R IV, 600mm + 2x)

We spent the entire 10<sup>th</sup> day of the expedition searching for wildlife and again found absolutely nothing. With just one day to go, the odds of seeing, much less photographing any wildlife is diminishing rapidly. I do not believe this should be marketed as a photo trip for “Snow Leopards of Ladakh”, but rather as an Indian Himalayas adventure with the possibility of maybe being able to photograph a Snow Leopard and other wildlife as well as the spectacular mountains. So far this year, the closest approach has been 500 meters which is simply not conducive to good sharp wildlife photos. Today included a hike at 13,000 feet that was all uphill on the outbound leg. Slow and steady is the order of the day and trying to keep up with Ladkhis that have lived in these high elevations their entire life is a one way ticket to misery. Just a slow and steady pace is the way to go when going uphill.

One member of our crew went down hard with what appeared to be a combination of a food-borne bug and altitude sickness. She had been struggling some ever since we reached Leh at 11,000 feet and had made some comments that the altitude was much harder on her than she anticipated, especially above 13,000 feet. For me, the 5 day acclimation period with two-a-day workouts at density altitudes exceeding 12,000 feet in Colorado before coming on the trip is paying off big time as I am feeling no ill effects even at close to 14,000 feet and am having no physical challenges whatsoever. Since we were too far afield to return to the lodge for lunch, the lodge brought lunch to us out in the field even though we were about an hour away. This included tables, chairs, porcelain china, etc... It was absolutely mind boggling to be sitting in a meadow at 13,000 feet above sea level having a hot Ladakhi meal with the mighty Himalayas in the background. On the way back the vehicle I was in with Dorjay had a flat tire after passing through a road construction zone where they were chipping rock! Fortunately, the vehicle that had taken our sick expedition mate back to the lodge happened to return at almost the same time as the flat, so we transferred our gear into that vehicle and went on.



Chukar - India (a7R IV, 600mm + 2x)



On our final full day in the Ullay area, I went outside at dawn and it was dead clear so I wasn't going to get anything on the mountains that I didn't already get. After breakfast, I went out to see if I could find some birds and did photograph Great Rosefinch and Robin Accentor. One spotter spotted the tracks of a Snow Leopard and cub and eventually found them. In order to get a view of them we had to drive down to the mouth of a valley and then hike up the valley 2.2 miles gaining in elevation from 12,300 to 13,000 feet carrying large and heavy photo gear. When we got there, we did spot the Snow Leopards but the distance to them was about 1600 meters or about a mile. Eventually the mother kept her cubs in the cliffs while she killed an Ibex. This was about 1920 meters or well over a mile away. Photos using APS-C (1.5x crop), a 600mm f/4 lens, and 2x teleconverter resulted in just a tiny image of the cats completely blurred by heat shimmer and atmosphere. I resorted to just viewing the activity on the rear LCD with the effective 1800mm of focal length plus an 8x digital zoom for an effective focal length of 14,400mm – at these focal lengths, any breeze or even people walking by within 10 feet caused the image to shake. We were about to end our time with one sighting of a mom and two cubs in a completely unphotographable situation, but I did at least get to observe these cats in action, although at great viewing distance.



Western Himalayas - India (a7R IV, 100-400mm)

On the final morning before returning to Leh, I went out again early before breakfast to photograph the beautiful mountains as there were a few clouds over them to add interest. This allowed for a very nice panorama of the mountain range visible every day from the Snow Leopard Lodge. After breakfast we packed up and headed back on the 2.5 hour drive to Leh, most of which is on very poor one lane rocky mountain track. It was just me and Dorjay in the lead vehicle and we had a good conversation about

Ladakh, about Arizona, about our families, etc. despite speaking two completely different languages. Arriving in Leh, we checked back into the very nice Grand Dragon Hotel where I had a wonderful lunch and then soaked in a really nice long hot shower after not having running water for the last 6 days. On day 13, we traveled back to Delhi on an Air India A319. I had a weird experience with Air India. Since my luggage was overweight I had to pay \$25, which I knew was going to happen. But when checking in at the counter I asked if any business class seats were available and I was told that they were and that it would cost \$75 to upgrade for the short 1.5 hour flight and then there would be no excess baggage fee. So basically I would be getting the upgrade for a net \$50, not a bad deal, especially given Air India's extraordinarily tight economy seating. This is where the weirdness begins. Air India cannot do the upgrade at the check-in counter or take payment in anything but Indian cash currency at the check-in counter (this is true even in the very large Delhi airport where we had to go to an office in the airport to pay for our excess baggage on the way to Leh). They whisked me off to a little office on the other side of the small airport with just two gates to complete the transaction. In this office, a lady that spoke very little English started working on her computer and consulted a paper log and then even did some calculations on her Android phone. She finally upgraded me to business class after about 15 minutes. Now it came time for payment; I handed her my credit card and she said "cash only", even though there clearly was a line to enter a credit card payment on her screen which I pointed out. She again said, "cash only". So I asked if I could pay in US Dollars since I had no Indian currency and didn't need any for this trip. She said no and then said that I could go to the ATM outside which would force me to go through the very elaborate and lengthy security process all over again. So, I finally said forget it, just give me my coach seat back. She got mad and tossed my passport and coach boarding pass back at me. Now I had to go back to the check-in counter and by now my old seat had already been given away. I explained to the much more pleasant and English-speaking ticket counter agent what had happened and he got me a new seat in the Economy + section and waived the excess baggage fee for my troubles. I ended up not having anyone in the middle seat and all was well. I later found out from one of the Frozen Himalayas people that what the lady was doing was a self-enrichment scam that apparently is common with unsuspecting foreigners trying to upgrade. What she does is to process a complimentary upgrade but then charge for the upgrade in Indian cash and pocket the cash paid for the upgrade for herself. Very weird!



Great Rosefinch - India (a7R IV, 600mm + 2x)



Back in Delhi, after encountering the most insane traffic jam where our bus had to cut across 4 lanes in just 100 feet with essentially zero room between cars that were running as much as 6 wide on the 4 lane road, we each had a day room as most of the flights leave in the very early morning hours. Just about every human being except Europeans and Americans are wearing masks in the Delhi airport thinking they are protecting themselves from the coronavirus. As I understand it the masks don't protect you unless you change them every 4 hours and even then, they are more effective at keeping your own sneezing and coughing in than they are in protecting you from others. And the fact that most of them require constant adjustment makes you actually touch your face more...

I had an on time 3:20AM departure on a British Airways 787 with a more northerly routing than the flight from London to Delhi which took us over northern India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, across the Caspian Sea, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Germany, Belgium, across the English Channel into London. It appears from watching the routing of this flight for several days, the west-bound flight always goes around Ukraine to the north and the eastbound flight goes around it to the south. This Ukraine avoidance is still in place after the downing of the Malaysian Airlines flight over Ukraine several years ago. The irony is that this downing is widely believed to be at the hands of Russian forces mistaking it for a military plane yet the avoidance of Ukraine when flying to the west is done by flying over the very country accused of shooting the plane down...



Western Himalayas - India (a7R IV, 100-400mm)

I have flown in and out of London Heathrow dozens of times, but this is the first time that I ever got good views in decent weather of central London and its famous landmarks. I took lots of phone pictures even though the 787's LCD panel dimming windows aren't really good for photography - they do build in polarization for more saturated color. I breezed through security at Heathrow, compared to the usual nightmarish process due to arriving very early on a Saturday morning – from plane, through security and into the BA First lounge in less than 10 minutes – this process normally takes an hour or so. The final



flight, again on a BA 787 from London to Phoenix was a very long, nearly 12 hour flight due to strong headwinds.

While this trip was truly enjoyable and I got to experience a part of the world that I had not seen before, including the most awesome and highest mountain range short of Olympus Mons on Mars, there is a part of me that is also disappointed. This trip was supposed to be a wildlife photography trip but it really was a wildlife spotting scope trip and even then, with a powerful spotting scope, the wildlife was very tiny in the scope. Once I resolved myself to this fact, I had a great time focusing more on the incredible mountains and the overall experience. The local guides are absolutely first rate and the logistics were second to none from anywhere I have gone in the world. So, in the end an incredible experience that exceeded its billing for landscapes and fell way short of its billing for wildlife. As far as gear was concerned, I used the Sony a7R4 almost exclusively and only used the a7R3 in shooting situations where the light was changing so fast that I did not want to take the time to change lenses so I would mount one lens on the a7R4 camera and another on the backup camera. From a lens perspective, I took a rented 600mm f/4 and 2x teleconverter (rented from LensRentals.com) along with my own 1.4x teleconverter for wildlife. For landscapes, I decided to keep the kit light taking the excellent Tamron 17-28 f/2.8 and 28-75mm f/2.8 lenses along with the Sony 100-400mm lens. Surprisingly, by far my most used lens for landscapes was the 100-400mm lens. The 17-28mm went completely unused as there really were no opportunities for interesting and dramatic foreground objects.

I was scheduled to do a quick turn around and fly right back to the UK for a reshoot of the Isle of Skye as well as my first trip to the Outer Hebrides of Lewis and Harris with my good friend Alister Benn but unfortunately the coronavirus travel restrictions coupled with the high likelihood of not being able to get home, ferry cancellations, and the possibility of being put into quarantine even if I could get home, forced the cancellation of this trip at the very last minute. Additionally, the Faroe Islands trip I was scheduled to go on through Rockhopper Photo was also cancelled. Also, a week in Copenhagen, Denmark on one of my Great Cities of the World shoots had to be cancelled. Out of \$18,000 sunk on these trips, I was able to recover about \$14,000. Unfortunately, travel insurance has an epidemic exclusion and I was not able to recover the remainder. As far as airlines go, both American Airlines and SAS made it very easy to get a 100% refund but shame goes to British Airways for collecting a \$410 cancellation fee on one of my tickets and I lost 100% of my pre-paid hotel in Copenhagen which amounted to about \$1700. I also lost some of the sunk costs of the Scotland trip.

All of my photos from the Western Himalayas can be found here (note that I will be adding photos over the next few days): [https://ejphoto.com/india\\_page.htm](https://ejphoto.com/india_page.htm)



Western Himalayas - India (a7R IV, 100-400mm)

## Sony Mirrorless Cameras – What’s Still Missing?

My recent travels and workshops have been shot exclusively with my Sony a7R IV as the primary camera and the a7R III as a backup. Easily 95% of my shots since the a7R IV came to market have been with that camera; it has been a workhorse. With the experience of extensive use in the field, there are still things that really get in the way of a seamless photographic experience. These are the items that are problematic and, in some situations, downright frustrating and can even cause you to miss shots:

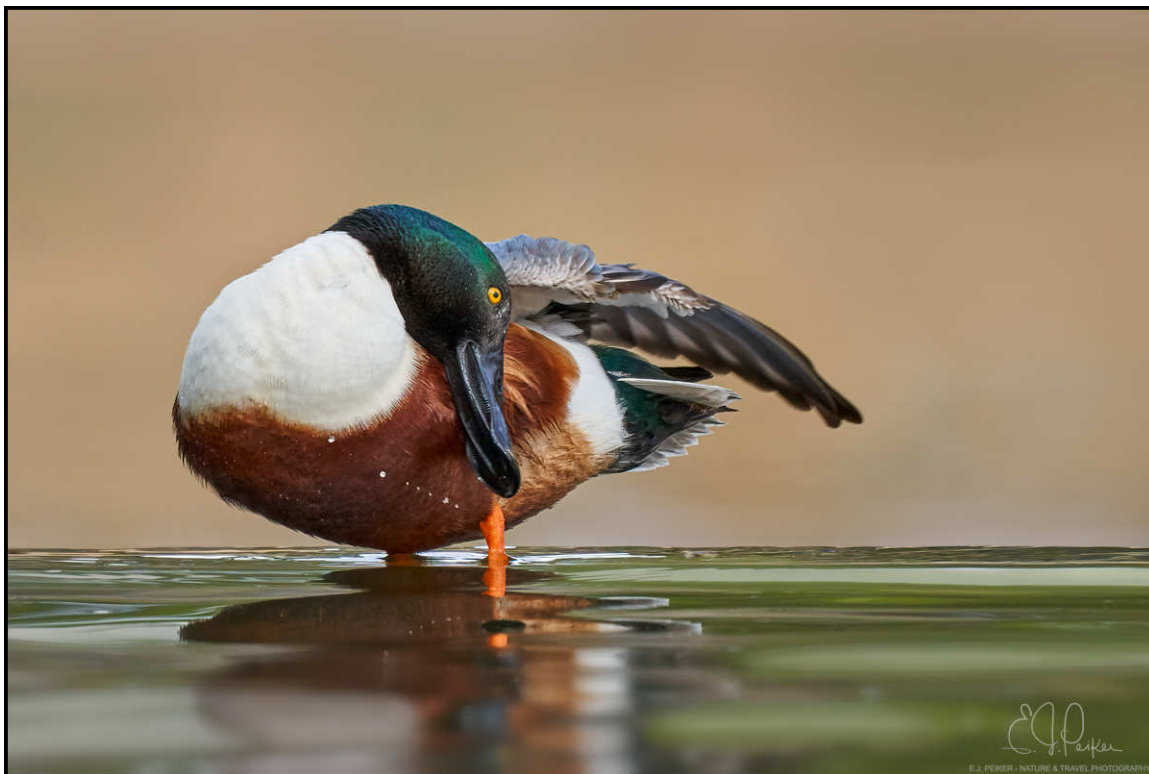
1. By far the most annoying thing to me is not being able to change camera configuration while the camera is writing images to the memory cards. This is true whether you have taken one shot or many shots. This scenario played out quite often in India where I was shooting with a 600mm with 2x converter in APS-C mode a lot due to the vast distance that most wildlife was located in relationship to the camera. I would have the camera in full frame mode to get a wider angle of view to orient myself and then switch to APS-C mode for the photograph. If I took some photos before switching I would not be able to switch until all of the 61 megapixel files were completely done writing to the card. Similarly, AF modes or really anything at all on the camera cannot be changed until the camera finishes writing all of the files even though the buffer may be 95% empty. Imagine taking a buffer filling sequence in a wildlife photography situation and needing to change something like AF mode or crop mode or anything and not being able to do it for a whole minute while the buffer clears...
2. Related to number 1 above is incredibly slow write times to the SD cards compared to other systems even with the fastest cards on the market. I did a comparison to a Nikon Z7 on the India trip which uses XQD cards and the same amount of data takes about 1/6 of the time even though the cards in use were only 4 times as fast. This means that the Sony write data rate is 33% slower than the Nikon's even when the difference in cards is taken out of the equation.
3. Sony is now the only camera system on the market that does not have focus stacking built into any model of camera. This is annoying in my landscape photography which often relies on it. Doing this manually is less precise and much more time consuming which leads to a higher probability of something in the scene changing between shots which then turn into post-processing problems.
4. Also related to numbers 1 and 2 is the fact that Sony still does not offer a lossless compressed RAW file option so if you want maximum quality you need to shoot uncompressed RAW which leads to larger file sizes than Fuji's or Phase One's 100 megapixel file sizes in a 61 megapixel camera. This data of course takes time to write complicating the issue of not being able to change anything on the camera until all images are done writing.
5. It has become clearer and clearer that the minimum AF point size is not small enough to critically focus on a fine detail. I found myself often having to manually tweak focus slightly on a distant object when shooting with the 600 f/4 lens and a teleconverter.
6. The Sony cameras still “dumb-down” to 12 bit files when shooting fast continuous bursts. This is also related to the slow buffer clearing issue forcing Sony to do this so that they can get data through the camera faster
7. Sony still does not offer a shutter speed selection longer than 30 seconds. If you need a longer shutter speed you must do it in bulb mode with a cable release – it's 2020, a simple one to three line tweak in the FW should address this.
8. The menu structure is still arcane, but this has been covered ad nauseum already by just about anybody that has ever reviewed a Sony camera.
9. Built in GPS is still missing from all Sony cameras

10. The lens selection is now excellent and when you add in quality third party options there is almost nothing missing. The only big ones are a 300mm f/2.8, 500mm f/4, long macro lens, and tilt shift lenses.

The Sony cameras and lenses are amazing photography machines that have really pioneered full frame mirrorless and in many ways are the best and most advanced mirrorless cameras on the market but they also have some glaring weaknesses. The top 7 or 8 above really need to be addressed ASAP if they don't want to get swamped by Canon and to a lesser degree Nikon. The competition has arrived and is gaining strength, Sony must respond on the usability front now that there are other options.

### **Sony's 600mm Super-telephoto Duo...**

Late last year, Sony released two exceptional super telephoto lenses, the G-Master 600mm f/4 and the G 200-600mm f/5-6.3 to complement the already released 400mm f/2.8 lens for FE mount and E mount cameras. Both of the new offerings are excellent lenses but with some minor flaws.

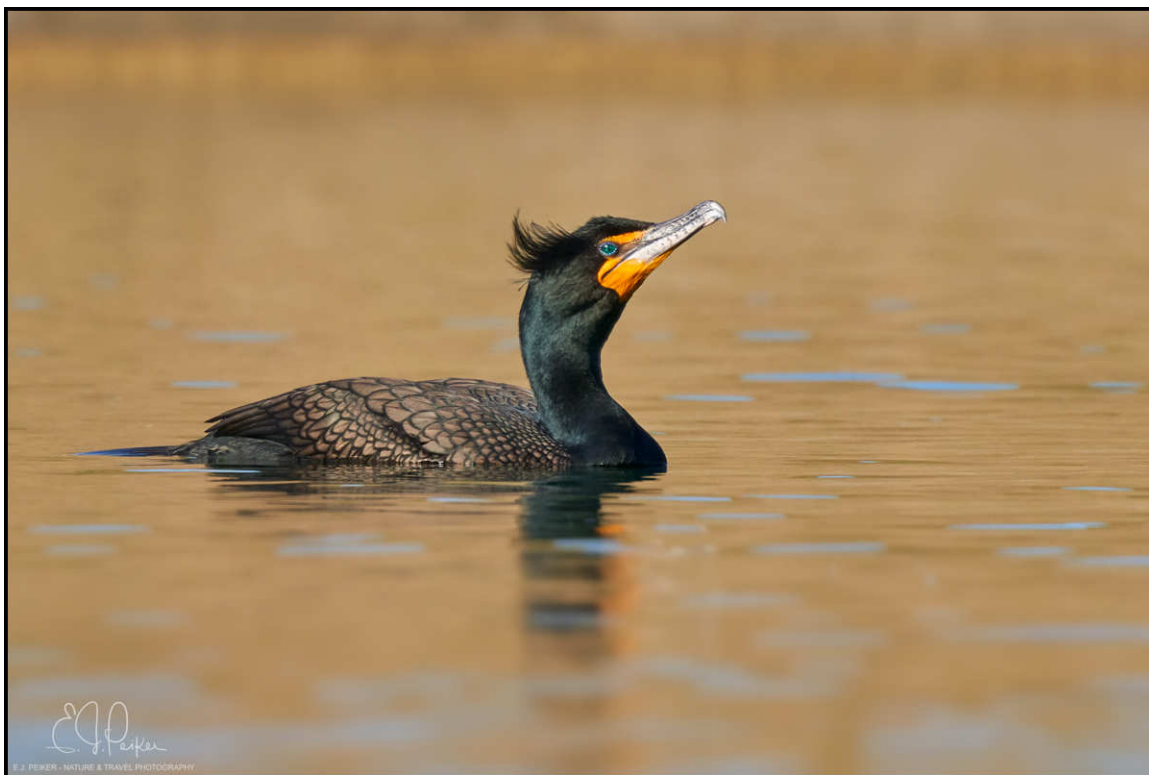


Northern Shoveler - Arizona (a7R IV, 200-600mm)

The 600mm f/4 is amazingly light at about 6.5 pounds and with most of the optics being close to the lens mount, there is less glass surface area inside the lens and therefore less weight and much better balance making it even hand-holdable in certain situations. It is an incredibly sharp lens with lightning quick autofocus due to its dual linear focusing motor design. Fit and finish of the lens itself is the best of any Sony lens I have ever seen. The optical image stabilization can be very effective this is where the first flaw in the lens is seen. Its tripod sensing is overly aggressive which shuts down its stabilization even in situations where there is obvious vibration from wind or other factors. Sometimes if you hold down the focus button for several seconds it will eventually decide to kick in while other times in a similar situation it kicks in right away and yet other similar situations it never kicks in. Clearly a firmware fix is



needed here to make the OSS more consistent and predictable when on a tripod. On the other hand if hand-holding, the combination of lens stabilization and in-body stabilization works without flaw; it's just when the lens is on a tripod that it is inconsistent. This problem exists for all three OSS (image stabilization) modes. The second flaw is in the design of the lens hood. It is a two part design with one part being the mounting collar and the other the hood itself. The two are mated just with physical force and tension and can easily separate. I can see how this might be a benefit if you need to remove the hood quickly without having the time to unscrew it but if the lens were mine, I would mate the two with superglue making it functionally equivalent to Canon or Nikon's lens hoods. I shot this lens with the Sony 1.4x and 2x teleconverter a lot in India. There is essentially no compromise when using the 1.4x teleconverter even wide open with the resultant 840mm f/5.6 effective optic. The story is not as rosy with the 2x converter. This combination is fundamental not critically sharp when shot wide open at the resultant 1200mm f/8. Stopping down to f/11 makes a huge difference – I have never encountered an optical combination that has as big of a jump in sharpness and acuity with just a single stop change in aperture. The lens costs an insane \$13,000.



Double-crested Cormorant - Arizona (a7R IV, 200-600mm + 1.4x)

The 200-600mm lens has the optics of a G-master lens but only gets Sony's semi-pro G rating due purely to the fact that it only has a single linear focusing motor. When coupled with the slower f/5-6.3 aperture, AF performance is not on-par with the 600 f/4; however, I have yet to find a situation where it is not fast enough. I can honestly say that I never missed a shot during the entire winter duck photography season due to AF speed. It is clearly plenty good enough. Optically the lens is excellent even wide open. Since it can be shot wide open with confidence, the f/6.3 maximum aperture at the long end is not a big problem. Two of my favorite things about this lens is that it is an internal zoom lens and that it uses less than a quarter of a rotation on the zoom ring to go from 200mm to 600mm. The internal zoom is great when using on a gimbal type camera support as the lens does not get longer when zooming to 600mm and therefore the weight does not shift. This was accomplished without making the lens larger than other lenses in the same genre, all of which get much longer and shift the weight towards the front

as you zoom. By being able to go from 200mm to 600mm almost instantly in a single quick turn of just 75 degrees is extremely useful in fast shooting scenarios. All of the other lenses in this genre are impossible to go from the short end to the long end of the zoom range in a single quick wrist action. This lens works well with the 1.4x teleconverter but stopping it down 2/3 of a stop to f/11 results in maximum sharpness. While the 2x can be used and it will autofocus with it, it is not a super sharp combination primarily by being an f/13 optic to start with and then needing to stop down which puts you deep into high ISO, slow shutter speed, and diffraction territory. The OSS or image stabilization on this lens has a similar issue as that described for the 600mm f/4 but it isn't quite as obvious. It still is overly aggressive on shutting off OSS when it senses that it is mounted on a tripod. At \$2000 this lens is a steal as it gives up almost nothing on image quality to its \$13,000 sibling and still providing fast enough AF on just about anything you can throw at it.

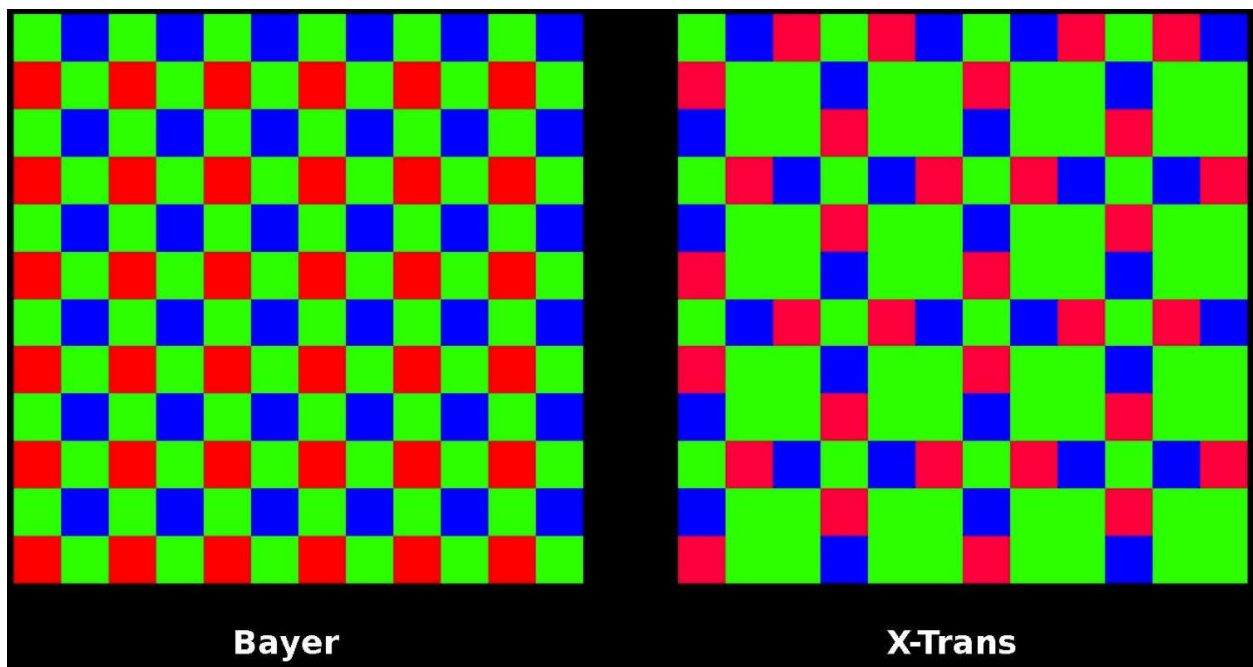
Sony has started to fill in the super-telephoto part of their lens range with these two lenses and with the exception of some fine tuning of the OSS algorithms really has an exceptional pair of lenses with the 200-600mm and 600mm lenses. At this point, only a 300mm f/2.8 and 500mm f/4 lens is missing from their lens lineup.

### Fujifilm X-T4 Ships



I have been outspoken over the last few years that the Fujifilm X-T series (along with its medium format ergonomic equivalent GFX-50S) are my favorite cameras on the market from a physical user interface standpoint. They provide both the film-era type manual controls for shutter speed, aperture, and ISO as well as the digital era dials and buttons type interface making them customizable to just about any type of shooting style. The physical interface is second to none in the digital camera industry. This quarter introduced the latest iteration of these cameras, the X-T4 although shipments have been limited due to factory capacity issues brought on by the coronavirus outbreak in China. The Fujifilm X-T4 keeps all of the outstanding qualities of its predecessors and addresses some of the shortcomings of them with two major exceptions – we'll get to those a little later.

The X-T4 continues to use what I consider to be the very best APS-C sensor on the market, the Sony 26 megapixel sensor. It adds in-body-image stabilization or IBIS so that any lens, whether Fuji, third party, or an adapted lens is image stabilized. The new camera finally uses a larger battery so the days of being out of juice after just 300 shots is a thing of the past - even with IBIS engaged one should expect 600 shots, more with IBIS off. This also leads to a deeper more comfortable grip. In-body battery charging while continuing to shoot is now available. The rear LCD screen has become fully articulating. One of my major gripes of all previous Fuji bodies is that if you were shooting overhead in vertical mode you could not tilt the screen down to see what you were framing as the screen only tilted up for below the waist shooting in vertical mode. Additionally, this also now allows the screen to face forward which is great for vloggers and taking self-portraits or group shots that you, the photographer, are in. Both 8 bit and 16 bit TIF are now file formats that the camera can natively shoot in. Action shooting is now possible at 15 frames per-second with full subject tracking and 20 frames per second using the electronic shutter on more static subjects. The already excellent AF system has been enhanced. Finally, video capabilities have been upgraded significantly.



There are only two major things that still bother me about the Fuji X-T4. The first is that it continues to use the X-trans color array over the Sony sensor which has a fundamental technical flaw where 4 out of 24 demosaiced pixels along both horizontal, vertical and 45 degree diagonal lines consist only of green data forcing the RAW converter to take a guess as to what that color really should be based on nearest neighbors. Some RAW converters like Capture one and Irrident handle this much better than others like Lightroom which requires a third party add-in to really do the files justice without weird white/green artifacting. I wish Fuji would just go with a normal Bayer array like they do in their medium format cameras or at least offer a Bayer array version of the camera which would make it an immediate “strong buy” recommendation; even with the X-trans sensor, I would still rate this camera a buy but only as long as you use something other than Adobe for RAW conversion of the files. Fuji claims that the X-trans color array reduces moire but this is a somewhat dubious claim as it is still easy to induce moire pattern interference even with the X-trans sensor. The second issue I have with the Fuji X and GFX cameras is that there is no flat profile or any color profile that is not a Fuji film simulation. You are forced to use one of Fuji’s film simulations, none of which represent what is really in the RAW file very well. You can



customize some settings to get close but even with this, there are situations, especially around blue hour shooting, that have you exposing less than optimally due to this.

The Fuji lens line-up for their APS-C cameras is the best and most complete in the industry but does lack a lens above 400mm. Despite the two major shortcomings above, the new X-T4 raises the bar on what was already the very best APS-C mirrorless camera on the market. As I have stated numerous times, give me a Bayer sensor version of this camera and I am all in for my travel and cityscape photography.

## **The Best Mirrorless Options for Landscape and Wildlife Photography**

The world has shifted pretty dramatically in the last couple of years with the proliferation of mirrorless technology and continuing development of both sensor and autofocus technology. This is a roundup of what I would buy by manufacturer for the traditional nature photography endeavors – wildlife and landscapes:

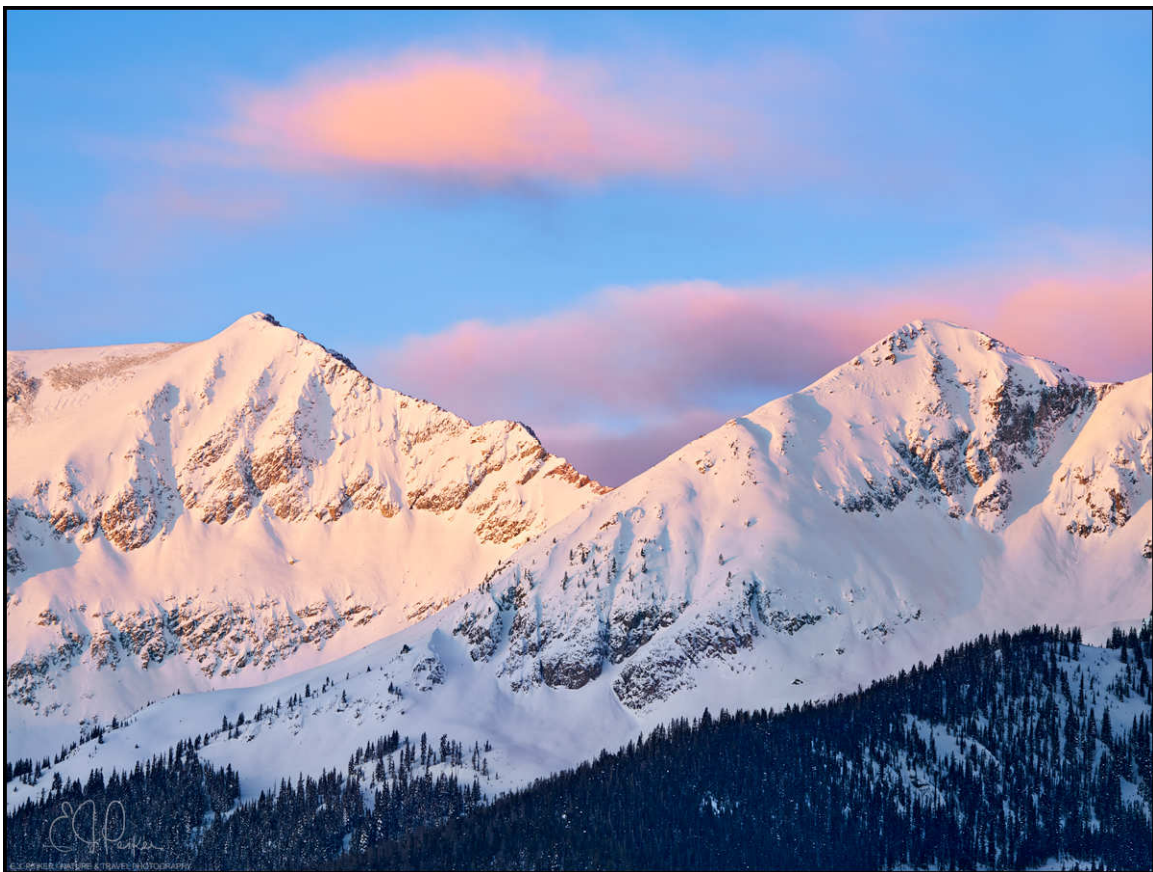
Canon – Canon's full frame mirrorless EOS R cameras have come a long way through firmware upgrades and their lenses are absolutely spectacular, the very best in the business currently. Unfortunately, Canon has not yet brought to market a camera body that I would buy but the development of the EOS R5 looks, on paper, to be the answer. My recommendation for Canon landscape shooters is to wait for this body and then go all in with the EOS R5 along with the RF 15-35mm f/2.8L, RF 24-70 f/2.8L, and RF 70-200 f/2.8L lenses. There aren't any lenses available currently for wildlife in the RF mount yet and it will probably be some time so for now I would not recommend a Canon mirrorless system for wildlife. The Canon super long DSLR lenses like the 500mm f/4 or 600mm f/4 can be adapted but the AF performance is really only good enough for relatively static subjects.

Fujifilm – For landscapes, look no farther than the medium format GFX system along with the 23mm, 32-64mm and 100-200mm lenses. If you need to fill the gap between 64 and 100mm there is the 80mm prime or the 45-100mm lens. Note that you have to multiply the focal lengths by 0.8 to translate these to the more familiar full frame focal lengths so the recommended lenses above cover the range of 17mm to 160mm in full frame terms. If you need wider than this, the Venus Optics Laowa 17mm lens is an excellent option which translates to about 13mm in full frame terms. The GFX 1.4x teleconverter is matched exceptionally well to the 100-200 making it a 140mm – 280mm lens. If you need longer there is the 250mm lens which is perhaps the best lens on the market from any manufacturer for any camera system but it is very large and heavy for landscape purposes and probably too short for wildlife purposes although the 1.4x works extremely well with it. As for camera bodies, my preference is still the GFX-50S for its user interface. Without a doubt, the GFX-100 is superior for image quality and its on-sensor phase detect auto-focus is the best AF by orders of magnitude in any medium format camera, including those costing five times as much. If medium format is too big of an investment or the weight and size are not to your liking, the new APS-C 26 megapixel X-T4 (see mini review above) or even the previous generation X-T3 are highly recommended along with the excellent 8-16mm f/2.8, 16-55 f/2.8 or 16-80 f/4, along with the 50-140 f/2.8 lenses. For wildlife, the 100-400 is a good option. Note that one must multiply these focal lengths by 1.5x to get an equivalent comparison to full frame so the 100-400 would act like a 150-600 from a focal length perspective. Fuji is really the only manufacturer with a full cadre of APS-C lenses.

Nikon – The Z7 body with its most recent firmware updates has been transformed from a good but not great camera to one that is nearing the capabilities of the best Sony bodies. The lens selection is still a bit lacking but improving. Recommended lenses for landscape photography include the 14-30 f/4S, 24-70 f/2.8S (or the 24-70 f/4 if you want to keep it lighter), as well as the upcoming 70-200 f/2.8 which seems to be in a delay cycle, first due to some technical issues and now due to factory slowdowns

brought on by the coronavirus. Like Canon, Nikon has no super telephoto lenses yet for their mirrorless system but the 500mm PF works reasonably well with the Nikon adapter for all but the most active wildlife. AF performance with the 1.4x teleconverter on the 500PF is not where it would need to be for any kind of significant action but works well for static subjects.

Sony – Sony is the only full frame mirrorless system that is currently fully fleshed out (or at least close to that, see the article above). My recommendation today is the a7R4 camera in full frame mode for landscapes and either in full frame mode or Super 35 (APS-C) mode for wildlife. The lens choices I recommend are the 16-35mm f/2.8 (or the 12 – 24mm f/4 but note that it does not take screw-in filters), the 24-70mm f/2.8, either the 70-200mm f/2.8 or 100-400mm, and the 200-600mm lens for a complete set covering almost all landscape and wildlife needs. A smaller, lighter, and less expensive option with very few compromises for landscape shooting is the Tamron set of lenses which consist of a 17-28mm f/2.8, 28-75mm f/2.8, and the soon to ship 70-180mm f/2.8. These are excellent lenses, especially at f/4 and beyond that are much smaller and all take a more economical 67mm filter size. These have become my go-to lenses when weight is a factor – for the size, weight and price, they are spectacular performers. I have chosen not to include micro 4/3 systems due to the low megapixels and limited dynamic range (although Olympus does offer some in camera processing options to mitigate some of these in certain situations) nor the Panasonic L-mount full frame cameras due to inadequate lens choices at the present time.



Tenmile Range - Colorado (a7R IV, 100-400mm)

## The Story Behind The Photo



Common Eider – Churchill, Manitoba (EOS 1D, 600mm + 2x)

Very early in my Duck photography career, nearly 20 years ago, Greg Downing, myself, and a now deceased friend went to Churchill, Manitoba in the summer on a bird photography trip. Greg and I still have laughs about some of the things that transpired and I will forever have some of the most fond memories of any trip I have ever taken. One afternoon as we were looking for subjects along the Churchill River, which empties into the Hudson Bay, I saw the first Common Eiders of my life. Naturally I was very excited by this and immediately attempted to get photographs of them. Armed with the brutally heavy EOS 1D, original Canon EF 600mm f/4, 2x teleconverter, Wimberley head and Gitzo tripod, I got to the shore and got as low as I could on some ice covered ground at the water's edge. I took about a dozen or so photographs, including this one of both the male and female. I knew I had to stop down to get them both in focus due to the incredibly shallow depth of field of a 600 f/4 lens coupled with a 2x teleconverter and got this shot, which is my favorite from the session. A few minutes after I started photographing them, I got the weird sense that I was moving. Looking up, I immediately noticed that the land was passing me by and I realized that I had parked myself on ice that was extending out into the river and it had broken free and I was now drifting down the Churchill River, next stop somewhere in the Hudson Bay. While a sense of panic crept in, I realized I had to keep my head and carefully got up and realized I was still about 3 feet from the shore on my ice flow but accelerating. I grabbed my gear and took a huge leap back to the shore, landing safely on land without a scratch to person or gear. I sat down and just took inventory of my bodily functions, pulse, etc. It dawned on me that I was lucky that the ice was big enough that my weight did not throw the chunk of ice off balance enough to flip as I moved to the edge to jump off. Had everything not turned out, I might have met my demise in the icy waters of the Hudson Bay. Since this incident, I have amassed many more Common Eider photos from numerous locations around the world but this one is by far the most memorable and not because it was my first.



## Social Media Reminder

In the Spring 2019 newsletter I laid out my Social Media presence and strategy. Since then my Instagram footprint has increased substantially through slow organic growth. It is relatively easy to get thousands of followers if you pay Instagram to promote your photos but like my on Facebook, I have decided to let it grow organically without paying to promote followership, Just a small reminder to please subscribe to my Instagram page if you would like to see some of my best landscape photography: <https://www.instagram.com/eipeiker/> and to my Facebook page to see a mixture of wildlife and landscape photography: <https://www.facebook.com/EJPeikerNaturePhotographer>

## Continuous Garage Sale

I have decided to move my bi-annual garage sale of quality used photographic products to a continuous sale. All items that are currently available are now listed on my website. If there is something that you think I might have that isn't listed. Don't hesitate to drop me an email. I have added three notable items to the large list of sale items – two infrared cameras and the excellent Irix 11mm rectilinear lens for Nikon. Here's the direct link to all of the gear I am currently selling – it is kept up to date: [https://ejphoto.com/gear\\_for\\_sale\\_page.htm](https://ejphoto.com/gear_for_sale_page.htm)

## The Best Lenses for Your Nikon DSLR, Canon DSLR, and Sony (FE) Cameras

The table of best lenses for your camera is a living document that gets updated every quarter. Changes from previous tables can be seen in bold. Once the ecosystem for the Canon RF and Nikon Z mount matures, I may include or switch over to those mounts. For now, all of the lenses below work well with the proper adapter to Canon and Nikon full frame mirrorless cameras.

Lens Category	Canon EF Mount	Nikon F Mount	Sony (F)E Mount
Full-frame Fisheye	Canon 8-15mm f/4L Sigma 15mm f/2.8	Nikon 8-15mm f/3.5E Sigma 15mm f/2.8	Sony 28mm f/2 + 16mm Fisheye Conversion Lens
Hyper Wide Prime	Sigma 14mm f/1.8 Art Irix 11mm f/4	Sigma 14mm f/1.8 Art Irix 11mm f/4	Sigma 14mm f/1.8 Art Voigtländer 12mm f/5.6
Ultra Wide Prime	Zeiss Milvus 15mm f/2.8 Canon TS-E 17mm f/4	Zeiss Milvus 15mm f/2.8 Nikon 19mm f/4 PC	Zeiss Batis 18mm f/2.8 Voigtländer 15mm f/4.5
Extra Wide Prime	Zeiss Milvus 21mm f/2.8 Sigma 20mm f/1.4 Art	Zeiss Milvus 21mm f/2.8 Sigma 20mm f/1.4 Art	<b>Sony 20mm f/1.8 G</b> Zeiss Loxia 21mm f/2.8
Standard Wide Prime	Zeiss Otus 28mm f/1.4 Zeiss Milvus 25mm f/1.4 Sigma 24mm f/1.4 Art	Zeiss Otus 28mm f/1.4 Zeiss Milvus 25mm f/1.4 Sigma 24mm f/1.4 Art	Sony 24mm f/1.4 GM Sigma 24mm f/1.4 Art
Moderate Wide Prime	Sigma 35mm f/1.4 Canon 35mm f/1.4L II	Sigma 35mm f/1.4 Zeiss Milvus 35mm f/2	Sigma 35mm f/1.2 Art Sony-Zeiss 35mm f/1.4
Standard Prime	Zeiss 55mm f/1.4 Otus Sigma 50mm f/1.4 DG Art	Zeiss 55mm f/1.4 Otus Sigma 50mm f/1.4 DG Art	Sony-Zeiss 55mm f/1.8 Zeiss Loxia 2/50
Portrait Prime (short telephoto)	Zeiss 85mm f/1.4 Otus Canon 85mm f/1.2L II Sigma 105mm f/1.4 Art	Zeiss 85mm f/1.4 Otus Sigma 105mm f/1.4 Art Nikon 105mm f/1.4E	Sigma 105mm f/1.4 Art Sony 85mm f/1.4 GM Zeiss Batis 1.8/85
Medium Telephoto Prime	Canon 135mm f/2L Sigma 135mm f/1.8 Art	Sigma 135mm f/1.8 Art	Sigma 135mm f/1.8 Art Sony 135mm f/1.8 GM Zeiss Batis 135mm f/2.8
200mm Prime	Canon 200mm f/2L Canon 200mm f/2.8L II	Nikon 200mm f/2G Nikon Micro Nikkor 200mm f/4ED	N/A

300mm Prime	Canon 300mm f/2.8L IS II	Nikon 300mm f/2.8G VR Nikon 300mm f/4 PF	N/A
400mm Prime	Canon 400mm f/2.8L IS II Canon 400mm f/4 DO II	Nikon 400mm f/2.8E VR	Sony 400mm f/2.8 GM
500mm Prime	Canon 500mm f/4L IS II Sigma 500mm f/4 DG OS HSM	Nikon 500mm f/4E VR Sigma 500mm f/4 DG OS HSM Nikon 500mm f/5.6 PF	N/A
600mm Prime	Canon 600mm f/4L IS III	Nikon 600mm f/4E VR	Sony 600mm f/4 GM
800mm Prime	Canon 800mm f/5.6L IS Sigma 800mm f/5.6APO DG	Nikon 800mm f/5.6E VR Sigma 800mm f/5.6APO DG	N/A
Wide Angle Zoom	Sigma 14-24 f/2.8 Art Canon 11-24mm f/4L Canon 16-35mm f/2.8L III	Sigma 14-24mm f/2.8 Art Nikon 14-24mm f/2.8G Sigma 12-24mm f/4 Art	Sony 16-35mm f/2.8 GM Sigma 14-24 f/2.8 Art Tamron 17-28 f/2.8 Di
Standard Zoom	Canon 24-70mm f/2.8L II Tamron 24-70mm f/2.8 G2 Di VC	Nikon 24-70mm f/2.8E ED VR Tamron 24-70mm f/2.8 G2 Di VC	<b>Sigma 24-70 f/2.8 Art</b> Sony 24-70 f/2.8 GM Tamron 25-75mm f/2.8
Telephoto Zoom	Canon 70-200mm f/2.8L IS II Tamron 70-200mm f/2.8 G2	Nikon 70-200mm f/2.8E FL VR Tamron 70-200mm f/2.8 G2	Sony 70-200 f/2.8 GM Sony 70-200 f/4G
Super Telephoto Zoom	Canon 200-400mm f/4L 1.4x Canon 100-400 f/4.5-5.6 II	Nikon 180-400 f/4E 1.4x Sigma 150-600 f/5-6.3 Sport	Sony 100-400 f/4.5-5.6 GM Sony 200-600 f/5.6-6.3 G
Macro	Sigma 150mm f/2.8 Macro OS Irix 150mm f/2.8 Macro	Sigma 150mm f/2.8 Macro OS Irix 150mm f/2.8 Macro	Sony 90mm f/2.8 Macro Tokina Firin 100mm f/2.8 Voigtlander 110mm f/2.5

## Workshops

All of my group workshops are run through NatureScapes Certified Workshops. Please check out all of the great offerings from NSN here: <https://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/>

Private instruction in camera operation, landscape and wildlife photography is also available as well as image processing training. Photo workstation consulting services are available. To learn more click here: [http://www.ejphoto.com/duckshop\\_private.htm](http://www.ejphoto.com/duckshop_private.htm)

## Facebook and Instagram Pages

I routinely post new photos, articles, etc on my Professional Facebook Page and my Instagram Business Page as well as links to my latest articles. If interested, please click below and then click on the Like button.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/EJ-Peiker-Nature-Photographer/>

<https://www.instagram.com/ejpeiker/>

## Newsletter Info

This is the 19th year of my quarterly Newsletter. I try to cover the wide array of digital imaging and products from mirrorless to medium format and everything in between. Throughout the years, the information contained herein has always been free and will continue to be free despite the many hours it takes to put it together and significant equipment and travel expenses. Most of the products that I have tested and reviewed, I have purchased myself. A small minority have been made available to me for review and evaluation by loyal readers and a few by the manufacturers themselves. While the newsletter is free either via eMail subscription or via accessing it on my website at

<http://www.ejphoto.com/newsletter.htm>, if you find the information useful to you and you do wish to donate for my continuing efforts, you may do so via PayPal and sending the funds to [ejpeiker@cox.net](mailto:ejpeiker@cox.net).

## Disclaimers

E.J. Peiker conducts consulting services and product design services for a number of photographic product companies. Those that know me know that I would not endorse a product, even for compensation, if I did not feel it were a superior product.

E.J. Peiker is a co-founder of [www.Naturescapes.net](http://www.Naturescapes.net) and leads photographic workshops under the **NatureScapes** Certified Workshops banner.

E.J. Peiker is a member of **Nikon** Professional Services and receives some services at a substantial discount or free of charge from Nikon USA. [www.nikonpro.com](http://www.nikonpro.com)

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Western Himalayas - India (a7R IV, 100-400mm)

E.J. PEIKER - NATURE & TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHY