

QUACK

Newsletter of E.J. Peiker, Nature Photographer and www.EJPhoto.com
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Welcome to the quarterly newsletter from E.J. Peiker, Nature Photographer and www.EJPhoto.com. In this quarterly email publication, I will keep subscribers posted on upcoming workshops including the DuckShop Workshop Series as well as sharing some photos and experiences with you. I will also give you brief impressions on any new equipment that I get the opportunity to use and any other general information in the world of digital nature photography. Please feel free to forward this along to other photographers and interested parties but please do so only by forwarding this newsletter in its entirety. Note that all content is copyrighted by E.J. Peiker. If you would like to be added or deleted to the mailing list, just send me an email message at ejpeiker@cox.net. Back issues are available online at <http://www.ejphoto.com/newsletter.htm>



Molokai Sea Cliffs - Molokai, Hawaii (D3x, 24-70mm)

Molokai – Forgotten, Forbidden, Fantastic

Most visitors that go to Hawaii visit either Oahu, Maui, Kauai, or the Big Island of Hawaii. These islands have mega resorts, night life, shopping, heavy traffic and all the crowds that come with heavily marketed vacation destinations. While these islands have incredible beauty, a photographer is almost always competing with many others to take in that beauty and traffic can be stifling.

Nestled in between Oahu and Maui is the 38 mile long and 10 mile wide island of Molokai. Other than a similar volcanically formed tropical landscape, being on Molokai is like being on a completely different planet than the one those other islands is on. This 350 square mile island has only about 8000 people, very few tourists, not a single traffic light and only a hand full of stop signs, just one hotel, no chain stores, no chain restaurants, or any other business that most people take for granted. Many of the residents fly or ferry to Maui or Oahu every month or two with empty suitcases and bring back large quantities of food and other goods since the two small grocery stores on the island simply don't carry more than the basic things and those are extremely expensive with a 2x mark up over the other islands which is about a 3x markup to the mainland. Molokai feels very remote despite being just a 20-minute flight from the hustle and bustle of Honolulu.

For the photographer, Molokai offers some spectacular scenery but some of it is difficult to get to. The crown jewel landscapes of this island are on the north shore of the eastern half of the island where sea cliffs as high as 3900 feet plunge to the North Pacific. Molokai, 1.5 million years ago, had a round eastern half formed by a large volcano similar to Maui and its volcano Haleakala. The northern half of the Kamakou volcano sheared off in a cataclysmic event leaving the north with sheer sea cliffs and the rest of the mountain in rubble beneath the surface of the Pacific. There are no roads to get to this part of the island, and even if there were, you would be too close to take in the vastness of the landscape. Going by boat (including sea kayak) or doing a private helicopter charter is the only way to take in that part of the island. Due to the very strong surf and wave action, boating is often not possible on the north shore. In my week there, I never saw a single watercraft of any kind on this side. There are no big air tour operators on Molokai either, however, there are some private charters available. Some of the big Maui helicopter companies offer trips with a very fast 15 minute fly by of the eastern parts of the sea cliffs but those all depart out of



Kapuaiwa Royal Coconut Grove - Molokai, Hawaii (D3x, 24-70mm)

Kahului, Maui and the majority of those flightseeing tours are spent on Maui with just a short Molokai extension where time is wasted crossing the Pailolo channel between the two islands.

On the west end of the island, Molokai offers some excellent and isolated beaches including the longest beach in the Hawaiian islands at nearly 3 miles long. It is likely that you will not see a single person on that beach, or any other beach. I discovered what I find to be the most photogenic beach I have ever seen. I spent a total of 12 hours photographing there on three separate days and never saw another human being. Due to the large distribution of this newsletter, including email subscribers, Facebook subscribers, and my website, in order to preserve this beach, I will disclose the location and how to get to get to this hidden beach via private email to those with travel plans to Molokai..



Hidden Beach - Molokai, Hawaii (D3x, 24-70mm)

At the north central point of the island lies the Kalaupapa peninsula. This is the isolated landmass that was used to banish people with leprosy and even today there are still a handful of people with what is now called Hansen's Disease. Leprosy or Hansen's Disease is a bacterial disease of the nervous system which results in shrinkage of cartilage and bone resulting in deformity. Today it is treatable and not infectious if the person is being treated. The area is now managed by the National Park Service as a Historic Park. It is only accessible by foot, mule, or aircraft and requires permits and a guided tour to visit. I spent a day on the peninsula with a guide and visited many of the historic places as well as the incredible view from Kalawao, the site of the original Hansen's Disease colony.

Those that come to Molokai typically come to get away from it all. I came to Molokai for a week in late May to photograph as much of it as possible. The entire time there, I did not see another photographer at any of the scenic photo spots on the island. The north shore was not accessible by boat due to heavy seas while I was there but I was able to take in this area by helicopter. One of the few tourist oriented businesses on Molokai is the Molokai Mule Ride. They take care of getting permits to visit Kalaupapa for its customers and then take people down to the peninsula and the guided tour of the

historic leprosy colony by mule. The historic tour keeps the teachings and legacy of Father Damien and Mother Marianne, caretakers of those stricken by the disease in the 1800's, alive. The great folks at the mule ride sponsored my private helicopter charter with a local Molokai pilot in exchange for some of the photos for advertising purposes. Private helicopter charters can be extremely expensive so this was a great way to get to take in the north shore without breaking the bank and without having to go to Maui, just to fly back for a quick 15 minute look at the cliffs.



Kalawao - Molokai, Hawaii (D3x, 70-200mm)

In my week on the island I covered pretty much every accessible area from the eastern beaches and headlands to the western arid beaches, from the rainforest heights of the Kamakou Preserve and Molokai's tallest mountain to the low lying and forbidden Kalaupapa.

Molokai allows you to experience the real Hawaii and it makes you feel like you have stepped back in time. The people are friendly; I got to meet and even have lunch with several locals. The scenery is beautiful and it is a great "get away from it all" destination for photographers. The residents are generally anti development and do not want to see their island go the way of the others so it is likely to stay like this for some time to come. A number of companies have tried to turn Molokai into a tourist trap but have been unsuccessful. If you want to go back 50 or 60 years in time to an unspoiled, undeveloped Hawaii and photograph scenery that hasn't been shot to death by other photographers, Molokai is a great destination.



Northern Gannet - Ile Bonaventure (D300, 200-400mm)

Northern Gannets in Eastern Quebec

In June of this year, I joined Chris Dodds on one of his Gannets Galore Workshops on Ile Bonaventure in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, Quebec. Wow! What a place. Not only is the area surprisingly beautiful, the sheer number of Gannets nesting on this island is mind boggling - several hundred thousand Northern Gannets. In addition to Gannets there are other species photographable along the sea cliffs which Chris's participants get to experience like no others. Under a special clause, exclusive to Chris's workshop a zodiac with the participants is allowed to get up close to the sea cliffs to photograph Razorbill, Common Murre, Black-legged Kittiwake, Harlequin Duck and much more in their habitat. In addition, we spotted Blue Whale and Minke Whale and photographed Gray Seal and Humpback Whale. Nice touches like transportation of photo gear the 1.8 miles to and from the nesting colony really make this a worthwhile and productive trip. For seabird lovers, Ile Bonaventure is a must and the way to experience it is with Chris Dodds who has nearly 30 years of experience on this island. Check out the workshop offerings at www.chrisdoddsphoto.com.



Northern Gannet - Ile Bonaventure (D300, 200-400mm)

EJPhoto.com Version 4 Launched

For the last year or so I have been toying with updating my website with bigger pictures, improved navigation and improved performance but with 12,000 photos on 1200 pages the task is daunting. After the Molokai trip and prior to my trip to photograph northern Gannets in Quebec, I found myself with a little time on hands so I started the process. Those that know me personally know that I have great difficulty leaving something unfinished once I start working in something. In fact I'm the type that has great difficulty sleeping when there is unfinished business. So for a period of 11 days straight working between 16 and 18 hours a day I revised my website. here are some of the changes and features:

- All photos are now either 750 or 800 pixels along the longest side, this is a more than doubling of the number of pixels per picture from the previous version.
- The navigation in the Scenic gallery has been substantially changed. I have always gotten lots of feedback that people like that they don't have to navigate through a thumbnail to see every picture of a region. That is unchanged but selecting a region within a state or a country is now a visual experience rather than reading from a list and picking an area. Each area is depicted by a thumbnail but clicking on it reveals all of the photos in full size for that area.
- Of the 12,000 photos on the site, about 10% are film scans of photos taken between 1971 and 2001. They were shot on many different films with different cameras and different scans over the 4 decades of my photographic life. I have reprocessed most of them with modern tools to dramatically improve color fidelity, reduce grain, and increase visual acuity.
- Since the site has multiple generations of images processed in multiple ways, I have reprocessed many shots to achieve an even luminosity level between generations of film - from Kodachrome to Ektachrome to Fujichrome, from Kodacolor to Fujicolor, from old BreezeBrowser RAW conversions to Adobe Camera Raw 6.x conversion - all now have a more uniform look. It is however nearly impossible to desaturate Velvia and and Kodachrome VS to anything resembling reality for color. But I tried!
- The JPEG reduction has been reduced on many photos to insure better image quality.
- The number of images per page now



Bristle-thighed Curlew - Midway Atoll (D700, 500mm)

- autoscales to the screen or window resolution that the viewer is using.
- All content is now displayable on Apple iOS devices and is formatted in an iPad friendly fashion.
 - I have updated the Waterfowl of the World page with all of the latest IOC names and species breakouts.
 - Finally I made a number of changes under the hood for improved performance and ease of updating in the future.

I very much hope you all enjoy browsing through the new EJPhoto.com.

Ducks Of North America - The Photographer's Guide

Ducks Of North America - The Photographers guide is now in its 4th month of sales. Thank so much to all of those that have purchased it and I am absolutely floored by the number of really positive comments I have gotten about it and there have also been some very kind reviews.

As long time readers of Quack know, I have had a goal of photographing all of the world's waterfowl species for over a decade. This includes every duck that is native to North America except Masked Duck. I felt it was time I published a photographer's guide to the ducks of North America and the book "Ducks Of North America - The Photographer's Guide" was born. It includes every species found in the wild and in captivity in North America. The fundamentals of waterfowl photography including equipment, approach techniques, photographic technique and field technique are detailed. This is followed by a summary of all 37 native species and 46 species that are either accidental visitors or captives. Species accounts complete with photographs, information about them and how to photograph them are included. Most important to the duck photographer, I have also included some of the best places that I know to photograph each species. Even though most birds have a skittish nature, almost every species has a place where they are approachable. While this is by no means an exhaustive location guide, it will give you locations where you have a good chance for getting great photographs of these beautiful ducks. A short video and a link for immediate download of the book is now available: www.ejphoto.com/ducks_of_north_america_page.htm.



Facebook Page

On my Facebook Fan Page, I am keeping those interested up to date on what photo excursions I go on as well as short commentaries on a variety of photo related subjects and tools. I also have nearly 100 galleries accessible through there. Please visit:

www.facebook.com/pages/EJ-Peiker-Nature-Photographer/150804446733

and if you like what you see, please click the "Like" button.

Private Photography Instruction

In addition to the private DuckShops which I launched last winter after many years of group instruction workshops, I am now also offering private instruction in Wildlife and Landscape photography at the place of your choosing within the USA and Canada. All DuckShops and private Workshops will be of the one on one variety (or two on one). Clients may schedule time in 4 hour time blocks for either classroom or field sessions. With just two people, a number of shooting locations become possible that aren't possible for larger groups and thereby making it possible to photograph some species or locations that are not attainable with larger groups. More specific instruction, based on the client's specific needs, can be given using this delivery method in either the classroom or in the field. For more information please see the following link: http://www.ejphoto.com/duckshop_private.htm



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