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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 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>



Coastal Brown Bear - Lake Clark National Park, Alaska (D3x, 70-200mm)

Summer Travels

As always, I traveled to a couple of locations for purely photographic reasons in the Summer of 2011.

Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona:

Even though I have lived in New Mexico and Arizona for 27 years, I had never gone to Canyon de Chelly on the Navajo Nation in the North Eastern Arizona Four Corners Region. Four Corners is the only place in the USA where you can be standing in 4 states at the same time: Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, and Utah.

Canyon de Chelly is a canyon that has two primary arteries with a number of veins in each. The Northern canyon is called Canyon del Muerto and the southern artery is Canyon de Chelly. It is administered as a US National Monument on the Navajo Nation. It offers some excellent red rock canyon photography for the landscape photographer. There are a number of good afternoon and morning spots including some excellent ruins. If you are traveling to the popular Monument Valley or Antelope Canyon, make sure you leave time for at least a morning and an afternoon at Canyon de Chelly National Monument. If you have more time, hiring a Navajo guide and going into the interior of the canyon for some close up views of some of the ruins. One can hike to the White House Ruin without a guide and this is a very worthwhile hike with many vistas of the southern Canyon de Chelly. Canyon del Muerto is best in the morning and Canyon de Chelly is best in the afternoon but interesting shots can be made at all times of the day.



Canyon del Muerto - Arizona (D3x, 24-70mm)

Lake Clark National Park, Alaska:

On the western edge of Alaska's Cook Inlet and north of the Aleutians sits Lake Clark National Park. It is about an hour and a quarter flight from Anchorage, via bush plane, to the Silver Salmon Creek Lodge on the shores of the Cook Inlet. You land on the black sand beach at



Coastal Brown Bear - Lake Clark National Park, Alaska (D3x, 500mm)

low or mid tide and as soon as you get out of the plane, you may see Brown Bears playing and fishing in the surf. The Coastal Brown Bear is the same species as the Grizzly Bear. They are simply called Coastal Brown Bears if they reside in coastal regions and called Grizzly Bears if they reside in the interior.

I spent 5 days with the bears, much of it in water and sand photographing these magnificent creatures and their cubs with the NatureScapes trip to Silver Salmon Creek Lodge with Greg Downing. Many great photos of bears fishing, cubs sparring, and the general bear mischief that they like to get into were made. It was an incredible experience to be so close to these magnificent animals. While you are not allowed to approach a bear to closer than 75 feet, they can approach you to any distance they want and at times they are no more than a few feet away. The bears are accustomed to human activity in this region and the risk is relatively low but vigilance and caution must be taken at all times to stay in groups and not do things that could panic the bears.

New Gear

Every fall I try to give you my opinions of the new gear announced but so far Canon and Nikon has not announced anything new for the Nature Photographer although Nikon's announcement of their mirror-less camera is imminent and will sport a unique 2.7x crop factor sensor which sits squarely between the micro 4/3 format and pint and shoot sensors. Canon is starting to ship the new 300 f/2.8 and 400 f/2.8 lenses. The lenses on their own offer stunning corner to corner sharpness unlike anything we've previously seen, especially wide open but their performance with teleconverters appears to be a bit spotty, even with the newest Mk III Canon Teleconverters. My belief is that there are probably some early tolerance issues and also, in calibrating hundreds of lenses and dozens of bodies now, I have never found a camera/TC/lens combination that did not require some micro-adjustment and most need significant adjustment in the 9 to 20 point range. I also recently tested one of the new Canon 70-300 f/4.5-5.6L lenses and found it to be a superb performer. It is easily the sharpest and fastest focusing lens in this genre.

Sony made the biggest splash in the August new product announcements with the A77 that boasts a 24 megapixel APS-C (1.5x crop) sensor and uses its translucent mirror technology so there is no mirror slap. This also allows this camera to shoot at a whopping 12 frames per second in certain conditions. How well noise is controlled without losing detail with such small pixels will remain to be seen. I am not optimistic with such tiny pixel sites but early reviews are at least encouraging. Additionally, there is a scaled down consumer version of this camera called the A65 and even Sony's new top of the line mirrorless camera, The NEX 7 sports this same 24 megapixel sensor. Do we really need 24 megapixels in an area that is less than half of a full frame sensor? I wonder! But it is clear that Sony continues to make major inroads and the only thing keeping them from taking a chunk of the high margin professional market is a lack of lens selection, especially when it comes to professional super telephoto lenses.



Sea Cliffs - Perce, Quebec (D700, 70-200mm)

While we wait for the next generation bodies from both brand N and brand C, I do have a much less expensive but exciting product to introduce to you: The LensCoat Rain cover. It is easily the best rain cover on the market. It is very simple to use, keeps your gear very dry and adds almost no weight. Unlike the overly complex ThinkTank design or the other light and flimsy alternatives, this one strikes the perfect balance between ease of use and keeping your gear dry. It comes in a large and medium lens size. The largest will handle lenses from a 300/2.8 to an 800/5.6 while the smaller one is great for lenses like a 70-200, 300/4, or 400/5.6. Both sizes are available from the NatureScapes.net store or directly from LensCoat. I used one in some nasty Alaska weather including 60MPH wind and driving rain/ sea spray and everything stayed bone dry while I was able to continue shooting. One disclaimer, I was a consultant on this but it was already nearly perfect by the time I got to test it.

How Do You Keep Up With All Of This Photo Industry News?

The question of how I keep up with all of the latest information on the photo industry gets asked often. I pretty much have a daily routine where I look through several websites to ferret out the latest information. This includes many of the rumor sites including nikonrumors.com, canonrumors.com, 43rumors.com, zeissrumors.com, leicarumors.com and others as needed. I religiously read all of the dpreview.com articles, visit robgalbraith.com and bythom.com regularly, and read many other sites as needed. Additionally, I have been in the Nature Photography business for over 10 years now and have made many acquaintances that feed me, often proprietary, information. I also consult with a number of photo and computer related businesses and get early looks at some products. I will, of course, never violate a non-disclosure agreement or talk about unreleased products that I have real knowledge of, even without an agreement until their public announcement or release.



White House Ruin - Canyon de Chelly, Arizona (D3x, 24-70mm)

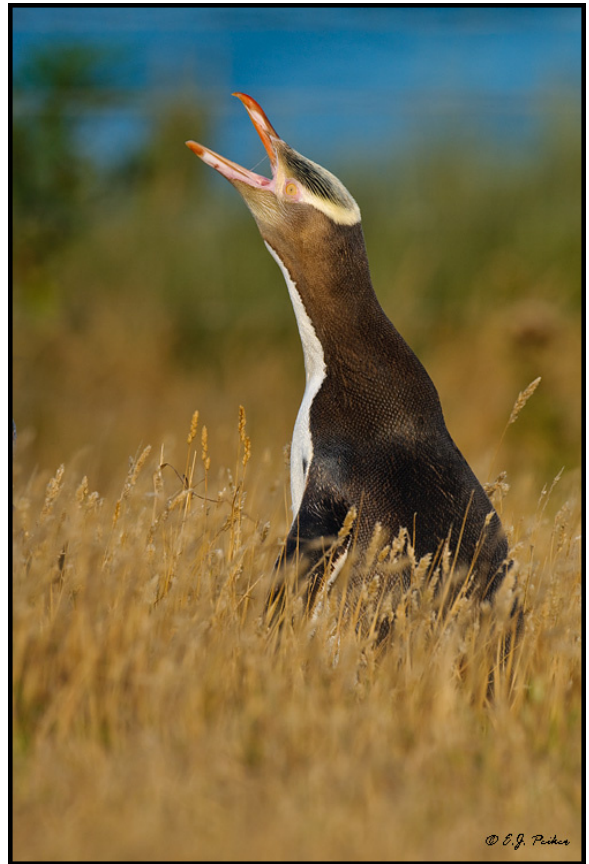
Workshop Announcements

As this goes out I am heading off to co-lead the Moose and Fall Color of Maine Workshop with Chris Dodds (chrisdoddsphoto.com). After that I still have a few weekends open this winter for private instruction. See www.EJPhoto.com/duckshops.htm for details.



Milford Sound - New Zealand (D3x, 24-70mm)

In just a little over a year I will be leading what promises to be one of the most unique, and dare I say EPIC, workshops I have ever led. Through NatureScapes Certified Workshops, I will be offering the New Zealand experience of a lifetime. This incredible 18 day (16 day in New Zealand plus 2 travel days) will feature both the magnificent landscapes of the South Island and the abundant and beautiful bird life of both the North and South Islands and even Stewart Island. In addition to myself as workshop leader, there will be a local guide and roomy vehicle transportation so that you can comfortably take any and all gear and have it next to you ready to shoot. From various species of Albatross to the world's only Alpine Parrot; from the rarest Penguin on Earth to the beautiful Paradise Shelduck; we will go after them all. From the spectacular 12,000 foot high Mount Cook to Milford Sound (arguably the most beautiful spot on Earth), to the intimate and unique Moeraki Boulders, we will shoot them all and strive to do it in the best light possible. Air travel between Auckland on the North Island and Christchurch on the South Island, ground transportation, boat charters, and hotel accommodations are included.



Yellow-eyed Penguin - New Zealand (D300, 500mm)

If you would like to learn more and see more pictures from this wonderful part of the world, please click on the following link starting on September 21, 2011:
http://www.naturescapes.net/workshops/new_zealand_2012



Pacific Brown Pelican, La Jolla, CA (D300, 200-400mm)

The February 2011 Southern California DuckShop is almost full with just two slots remaining as this newsletter goes out. This workshop begins in San Diego's La Jolla and Santee area and then moves up the coast to Orange County. You will be able to photograph an unprecedented number of species in high breeding plumage including many species of Ducks, the fantastic Pacific Brown Pelican, many Shorebirds including the highly desirable Long-billed Curlew and much, much more. Details can be found at this link:
http://www.naturescapes.net/docs/index.php/workshopdetail?ws_code=duckshop_2012

Two eBooks Now Available

With the winter fast approaching, now is the time to learn about and brush up on techniques to get the best waterfowl photos possible. In much of the USA, winter is the best time to photograph our many species of ducks and geese as they will be at their prime plumage and in large numbers in almost any body of water that isn't frozen solid. My eBook "Ducks of North America – The Photographer's Guide" is an essential text that



covers all of the techniques needed to get the best shots and perhaps many that you haven't thought of. It also covers every species and gives species specific tips on how best to capture them and where to find them. Eleven years in the making, this book is essential for the beginning, intermediate or advanced waterfowl photographer. The tips in it are easily applied to all birds and most other subjects too. It sells for \$30. While this is expensive for an eBook due to the incredible amount of time and money it took to create it, it will easily save you 10 times that in aggravation, time, and failed attempts.



I have also released my previously privately published paper book "West – A Collection of Photographs From The Western United States" in a fully updated and revised eBook version. It is available for \$10.

Both books can be ordered from the fine outlets you will find at this link:

http://www.ejphoto.com/ebook_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 and Consulting Services

In addition to the DuckShop photo workshops which I launched 10 years, I also offer private instruction in Wildlife and Landscape photography at the place of your choosing within the USA and Canada. These private workshops are 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

I also offer both photo equipment and computer workstation/digital darkroom consulting services. This allows me to combine my 27 years of work in the computer industry with my lifetime of photographic experience and provide services at a technical level that are hard to

find elsewhere. Contact me for rates and specifics or visit my rate sheet:
<http://www.ejphoto.com/Quack%20PDF/Rate%20Schedule.pdf>

Disclaimers:

E.J. Peiker conducts consulting services and product design services for a number of photographic product companies. The companies change from time to time.

E.J. Peiker is a consultant for LensCoat and receives compensation from LensCoat.

E.J. Peiker writes for and is supported by Singh-Ray Filters and receives non-monetary compensation from Singh-Ray Filters.

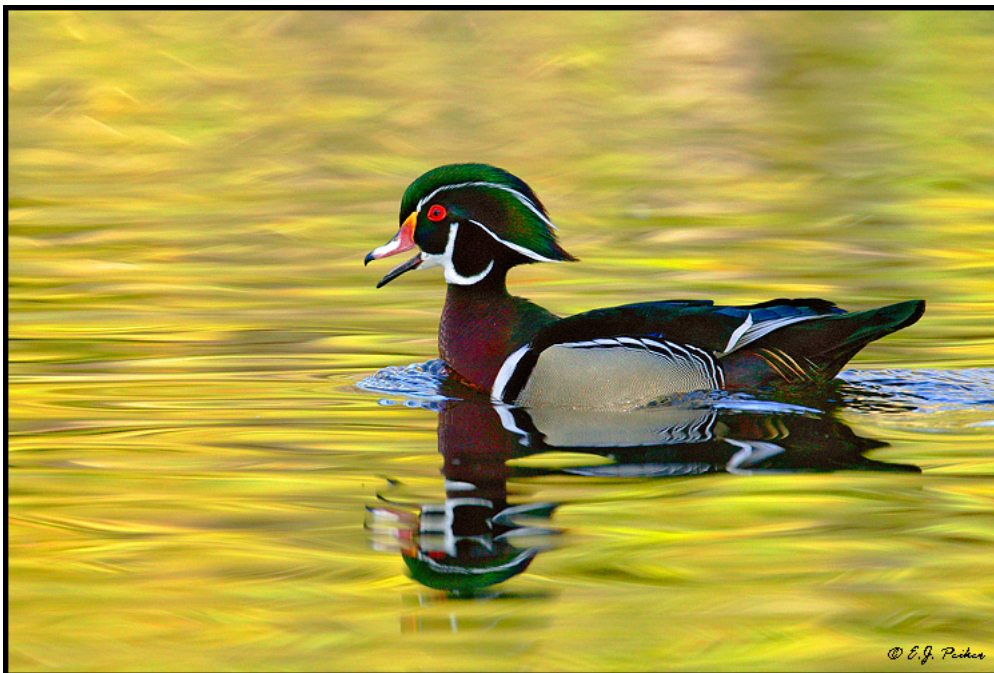
E.J. Peiker is a Wimberley Professional Services featured photographer and receives non-monetary compensation from Wimberley.

E.J. Peiker is a member of Nikon Professional Services and receives some services free of charge from Nikon Corp.

E.J. Peiker is a founding partner in NatureScapes.net and receives non-monetary compensation from Naturescapes.net

Those that know me, know I would not endorse a product even for compensation if I did not feel it were a superior product.

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Wood Duck - Santee, California (EOS 1D Mark II, 500mm)