

E.J. Peiker - Nature Photographer

2011 A Year in Review

Tumultuous times in the photo business world continued in 2011 due to some major disasters and world events such as the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear crisis in Japan, flooding in Thailand, the Arab Spring, and the near economic collapse of Europe. With a historical run rate of about 50% of my business coming from Europe, 25% from North America, 15% from Asia and 8% from the Middle East, the demographics of my business were not working in my favor in 2011. Fortunately, book sales, private instruction and group workshops in North America improved this year to offset the reduced image sales outside of North America. North America became by far the largest revenue source in 2011 with Canada and the USA in a virtual tie. In general, on time bill paying improved substantially 2011 compared to 2010 with only one grossly delinquent bill at the end of the year.

I completed my 10 year project to publish a duck photography book featuring every species of duck found in North America. "Ducks of North America - The Photographer's Guide" was published as an eBook on several Nature Photography oriented outlets on March 1, 2010. In the end, only three photographs in the book of some very rare species are not my own. By the end of 2011, I have 133 of the world's 155 duck species in my image library. I also re-published an older paper book as an eBook. This book features a series of photographs depicting the incredible Western United States. The book is simply titled "West"

Overall revenue ended about even with 2010 with a number of things in the pipeline to improve 2012 significantly. As mentioned, the private instruction part of my business went very well especially in the winter months at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year. It is so enjoyable working with enthusiastic individuals that just want to learn and get some great pictures along the way. I have made some lifelong friends in the process and have often learned many things from them based on their knowledge in their respective professions.

As usual, photography took me to some great places. I feel truly blessed that I am able to visit so many wonderful places on this planet. I didn't venture as far in 2011 as I did



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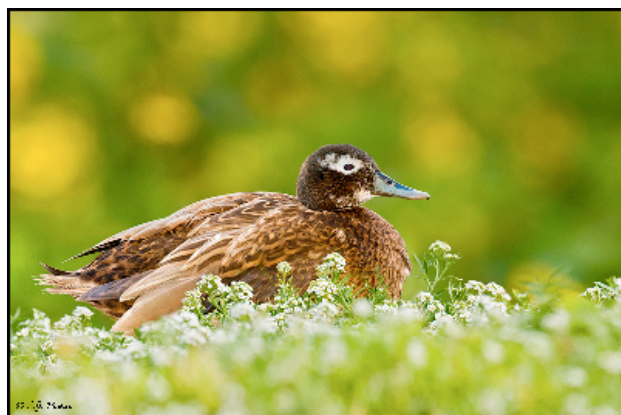
in 2010 (which included both New Zealand and Antarctica) but I still got to some fantastic locations.

Viera Wetlands - Space Coast, Florida: A DuckShop participant from my very first workshop ever 10 years ago met me at Viera Wetlands because I needed much better pictures of Mottled Ducks for my book. The trip was successful with many great images including some other species such as Limpkin to round out my bird portfolio. I also drove down to West Palm Beach to get a few shots of America's most colorful songbird, the Painted Bunting.

Semiahmoo Washington - After some research, I decided on the northwestern most tip of Washington to get photos of White-winged Scoters and Black Scoters for my Duck book. The White-winged variety cooperated nicely but the Black Scoters had me working hard. I did get publication quality photos of Black Scoters but I have more work to do in the future on that bird. While in northwest Washington I took a drive to one of my favorite mountain locations in the Mount Baker Wilderness and North Cascades National Park area. I had never been there in the depths of winter - wow what a pristine and snowy sight!

Midway Atoll - In April I finally got to visit a place that had been on my bucket list since I first saw some beautiful White (Fairy) Tern shots by John and Barbara Gerlach around 2000. Midway is located between Hawaii and Japan in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. I wasn't sure I would ever get to go to there, because visitor operations had shut down for several years. But after a flight to Honolulu and then a private charter on a Gulfstream Jet to Midway, I finally made it. And wow what a place it was - Albatross adults and chicks literally EVERYWHERE. My biggest motivation for going there was to photograph the very rare and highly endangered Laysan Duck. I was very fortunate to be on the island at the same time as the biologist from the USGS that was in charge of the translocation of this species to Midway. I befriended her and this gave me the opportunity to photograph this incredible species in ways very few can. Midway truly was a trip of a lifetime. I loved every single second of it.

Molokai - I was only home for 3 weeks before turning right around and hopping on a plane back to Honolulu and then on to Molokai. Molokai was the only island I had not previously photographed. In my pre-trip research I found Bruddah Roy, owner of the



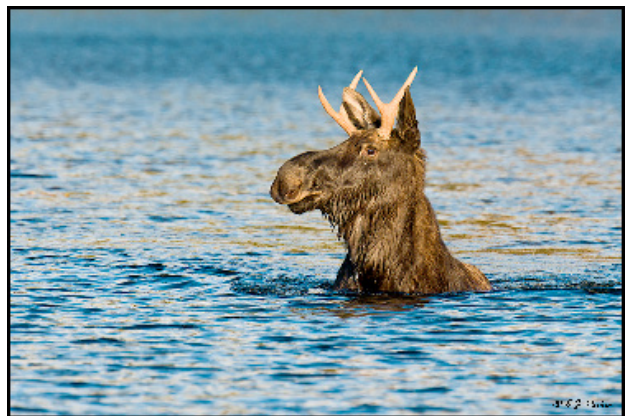
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Molokai Muleride Company which takes people on mules down to the Kalaupapa Leper colony. Roy and I struck a deal where he would set me up with a helicopter and pilot in exchange for giving him permission to use the photos for promotional materials with his business. What a deal, I got my own private helicopter that basically would go anywhere I wanted to get whatever photos I wanted and he got something out of it too. I photographed what seemed like every square inch of the island, got to know some of the people and was made to feel very much at home. Molokai is the way Hawaii was 100 years ago. I never saw another photographer the whole time I was there; there is only one hotel, only a couple of places to eat - it is true island life and I loved it!

Bonaventure Island, Quebec - Only two weeks after returning from Molokai, I packed my bags again and flew in the other direction to the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. Here I met with friend and Canadian Nature Photographer Chris Dodds to participate in his Bonaventure Island Gannett photography extravaganza. Mornings on a zodiac cruising around the island and the rest of the day up in the Gannet colony were fantastic experiences with unprecedented access to these majestic birds. Travel to this location is difficult with 4 flights and all with tight connections. As a result, I didn't get my bag with tripod until the second day but made due and Chris had a spare tripod I could use.

Canyon de Chelly - My own state of Arizona has so many natural wonders that it is sometimes easy to miss some of them with all of the travel to far away places. In July I drove to the far northeastern corner of my home state to visit Canyon de Chelly and Canyon del Muerte for a couple of days of pure landscape shooting. It was hot but I got some very nice photos of this natural wonder.

Lake Clark National Park - I love Alaska and a year without a trip to our northernmost state just wouldn't be right so when there was space on a trip to Lake Clark National Park and the Silver Salmon Creek Lodge to photograph Brown Bear fishing for Salmon and fattening up for winter, I jumped on it. Despite some rocky weather at times we made it there safe and sound on bush planes and had a great shoot with cubs playing in the water and mammas catching fish for themselves and their young. It was also nice to catch up with some other photographers in the business that I hadn't talked to in years that were there at the same time.



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Coastal Maine and Baxter State Park - In September I co-led a Maine Moose workshop with Chris Dodds in Baxter State Park in north central Maine. Due to unseasonably warm weather, the Moose were few and far between but we had some phenomenal fall colors and found plenty of beautiful things to photograph. I did trip and fall there and broke my left pinkie in several places but that didn't slow down the photography at all. Just prior to the Moose workshop, Acadia National Park and eastern Maine provided some great, although wet and foggy, photographic opportunities.

Washington DC - On the way home from Maine, I stopped in the DC area to attend an old friend's wedding but also took a couple of days to photograph Washington DC and spent lots of time in both units of the National Air and Space Museum.

Looking ahead to 2012 I have a number of workshops scheduled and more private clients. The two big workshops at this writing are a Southern California Bird tour in February and a phenomenal 18 day New Zealand trip for both landscapes and birds in October. I am very much looking forward to both and meeting my new participants. I also have a number of smaller trips in the planning stages and am formulating ideas for my next book. I am also expecting increased stock agency income in 2012 due to an expansion of my photos in the stock world.

In summary, in 2011 I again saw and photographed an incredible amount of beauty. Business due to world events and economic conditions was not as high as I had hoped and look forward to the world settling down a bit.

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