

CAPTURING BIRDS & OTHER WILDLIFE WITH YOUR CAMERA

Photography is a mix of art, expression and technology. Mastering it requires a steep learning curve which may become a joy, a frustration, or both. It may be a joy for the challenges it poses, and a frustration since our vision generally outpaces our ability to express it; the inability to express our vision is often due to our lack of mastery of the available tools. This is especially true for wildlife photography and capturing birds in flight, tasks which require a thorough understanding of photographic principles and camera functions in order to capture those special moments.

With the availability of great digital cameras, most of us have the technology available to produce great pictures. Unfortunately, taking those great pictures requires some knowledge of what makes a picture great and an understanding that enables the technology and minimizes frustration.

Capturing Birds & Other Wildlife with Your Camera is a unique presentation covering art, expression and the essential aspects of digital photography technology. The first part of the seminar focuses on developing a basic understanding of what is necessary from a technology perspective to achieve the artistic vision and expression and to understand the limits of the equipment. It reviews the variables that affect the photo and how to control them in order to achieve the desired selective focus, depth of field, highlights, etc. Next we will review special equipment appropriate for wildlife photography, comment on its pros and cons and finish with recommendations on techniques that work.

The presentation will take the participant on a journey of how to select unusual images and avoid common stereotypes via real examples covering landscapes, wildlife, birds and florals, spanning the use of wide angle to long telephoto lenses. The emphasis will be on how to capture the subject through tools like selective focus, depth-of-field, shutter speed, etc., with special emphasis on photographing moving wildlife and birds in flight.

Presenters: The seminar is led by **Linnea & Wolf Koch**, an unlikely collaboration since Linnea is an artist who has worked in the visual arts field for over 40 years, and Wolf, a practicing engineer, former educator and occasional photographer. Linnea accompanies him on many of his business trips throughout the country and Europe; together, they visit and photograph local landmarks, historical sites and notable gardens. They have made trips to Bosque del Apache in New Mexico to photograph sandhill cranes, snow geese and other migrating birds, as well as to Costa Rica for tropical birds and Florida for wading birds.

Linnea Koch, the daughter of an artist, has had an interest and worked in many different media, from painting and sculpture to etching and weaving. While she had fun with a simple camera during childhood, photography really became interesting when she received her first SLR camera in high school, a used early Exa (Exakta). That camera kept her looking for unusual subject matter, creating a new way of seeing common place subjects. From the beaches on Lake Michigan to travels around the country, as well as explorations in Europe, she has searched for intriguing subjects to photograph. Her photos have been published in corporate publications, calendars and books, including covers of nautical chart books. Her work is hanging in Sterling City Hall and has been made into banners which have decorated the IL Rt. 40 bridge between Sterling and Rock Falls. She has owned and operated a graphic design studio for over four decades, is an Illinois Master Gardener with a special interest in native shade plants, and has given many talks on local landmarks, shade gardening and some of the wonderful gardens here and in Europe.

Wolf Koch was photographing with an old Agfa in his his early teens. He acquired one of the iconic range finder cameras, a Canon 7s, in the late 1960s, moved on to SLRs and twin-lens reflex cameras, established a darkroom and processed his own color slides. His engineering job brought him to the Midwest, where he also spent two decades teaching as an adjunct professor of engineering and became a founder of SciTech Hands-on Museum in Aurora, IL, one of the first science centers in the Midwest to portray difficult concepts in easily understood demonstrations and displays. Wolf continues to consult, lecture and write on energy-related as well as historical topics. He manages Technology Resources International, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in petroleum products distribution technology, has authored more than 50 publications and attained 30 patents.