



Sand Art #2, Panoramas category, 2021 Salon, copyright Gretchen Kaplan.

July Monthly Meeting—Tues, July 27, at 7p: a virtual ZOOM meeting featuring Mike Matthews

Join us on July 27 for a Zoom meeting with Mike Matthews, who will be giving us a double feature—“Macro Photography and Bird Photography.” Here’s what Mike says we can expect:

Macro photography: The small but beautiful world. Exploring this small world can be simply amazing, seeing detail that is not visible to the naked eye. I will help you understand how the use of flash can free you from your tripod both indoors and out. Other features:

- Photographing greater than one to one and exploring extreme macro opportunities using a macro rail for focus stacking
- Using Zerene Stacker for blending multiple images to obtain maximum sharpness front to back
- Understanding lens choices and settings to get the most from your macro lens.
- How to use flash perfectly when only inches from your subject.
- How to protect the highlights from blowing out in your pictures.
- Equipment options for macro photography.
- How to get maximum depth of field and sharpness for small subjects.



Birdwatching through the lens of your camera: I will help you to understand bird behavior and when is the best time to photograph. Other features:

- The use of Auto ISO to get tack sharp images of birds in flight.
- The use of flash for photographing hummingbirds.
- Props and food choices for backyard bird photography.
- Changing your backgrounds to get a more pleasing image.

See’s Mike’s bio on p. 2. SANP club members do not need to register. The Zoom link will be emailed to you on Sunday, July 25. Guests who are not SANP club members must [register](#) to receive the Zoom link via email. On July 27, visiting time starts at 6:45 and the meeting at 7.

BIO: Mike Matthews, July presenter

Mike's passion for nature photography began over 45 years ago, and he has been shooting professionally for 20 years. His images have been published in numerous national publications like *Birds and Blooms*, *Gulfshore Life*, *Bassmaster's*, and more. Many of his images have also been published by universities for articles relating to specific topics like human/wildlife interaction.

Being an avid outdoorsman, his passion for photographing wildlife is ever present when he is in the field. Mike uses this skill to get very close to wildlife and captures stunning images that bring his audience along as if they were there with him.

A master falconer, Mike has trained birds of prey for over 40 years and offers bird of prey workshops in both Florida and in his home state of Kentucky. In addition, one of Mike's favorite topics is Herpetology (the study of reptiles and amphibians). This is an area that has led Mike to be one of the premier macro photographers in the United States. He is best known for his macro photography workshops where he brings exotic reptiles and amphibians for participants to photograph.

Mike also offers a variety of guided Nature Photography Tours, Birding Workshops, Floral workshops, and Extreme Macro. He has been a keynote speaker throughout the USA on these topics. Mike's hope is that you will enjoy his passion for photography, capturing nature in its truest form through inspirational images, giving God all the credit for enabling him to fulfill his dream. Learn more at Mike's website:

www.mikematthewsphotography.com



Mike Matthews our July presenter.



Red headed woodpecker, female hummingbird, macro closeup collage, 7x closeup of horsefly. Copyright Mike Matthews.

SANP Field Events

Check the [events page](#) on our website for all the latest information on future events. Contact [Dale Potter](#), 865.773.8114, if you are interesting in leading a field event.

Rhododendron Creek Falls — Sat, June 19. We had a great turnout for the Rhododendron Falls event. We took the long way around the loop to find the different falls. It was a great day for a hike and to see the different water cascades and falls. This is a great location for anyone interested in going back in the fall to photograph the different falls. *Dale Potter*

Sunflowers, Birds, Caterpillars, & Bees — Early on **Sat, July 17**, Dale Potter and around ten SANPers enjoyed a few hours at Forks of The River Wildlife Management Area photographing the sunflowers (in bloom now) and all the little critters buzzing and fluttering around the flowers. Hopefully we'll have some of those photos to share with you next month, since the newsletter deadline hit before this field event.

Focus Stacking Workshop — led by Ron McConathy, this 4-hour workshop takes place on the McConathy property in Kingston on **Wed, July 28**. This workshop is full (six SANP members signed up) but if all goes well, Ron plans to offer it again, so put your name on the [waiting list](#) if you are interested. See Ron's article on focus stacking on p. 7 of this newsletter.

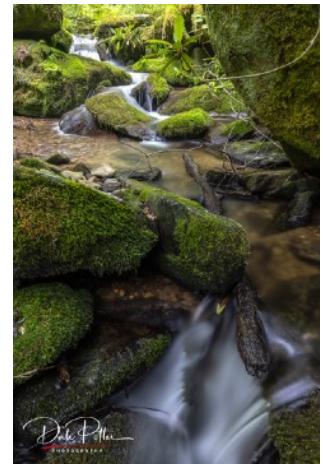


Photo of one of the falls visited during the Rhododendron Creek Falls event. Copyright Dale Potter.

SANP SALON 2022 UPDATE

Next year is SANP's 30th anniversary. With that in mind, the Salon Committee recommended to the Board several changes for 2022.

Categories: There are 15 categories in both the print and digital divisions. Categories have been redefined to make it easier to understand what fits within each category. Review the 2022 categories on our [Salon](#) webpage. A member can enter up to 16 digital photographs and 16 prints with a maximum of 2 photographs per category. A Best of Show will be awarded for each division from the first place winners in all division categories.

As you look at the redefined categories, identify the ones you want to enter. If you have considered doing prints but have hesitated in the past, this is a great year to take that step. If you need instruction on preparing prints for the Salon, email me at dalepotter55@gmail.com. We will plan something in the fall, so you have time to prepare your prints.

If you have friends who are interested in nature photography, encourage them to [join SANP](#) and enter the Salon. While it is great to win in a category, it can be just as rewarding to compete against friends whom you encouraged to join.

Venue. We hope the SANP Salon 2022 dinner, scheduled for February 26, will again be in-person. The Board approved our committee's recommendation to schedule the Salon 2022 dinner at Bridgewater Place, a unique event venue located in West Knoxville and easily accessible from I-40. This change is in celebration of the club's 30th Anniversary. After the Salon dinner,

Remember that your dues for 2021 must be paid by the end of the calendar year to be eligible to enter the 2022 Salon. To check your membership status, [log in](#) and click your name in the upper right corner to go to your [profile](#).

we'll be asking for your feedback on the venue as the committee and the Board consider the meeting location for 2023. We are hoping for a record turnout for this celebration!

Let's make Salon 2022 a record year for entries in print and digital divisions and the largest turnout of members for the Salon dinner. Mark the date on your calendar now. Dates for submission of images and judging will be announced later in the fall. This is a great time to start planning what images you want to enter or shoot.



Dining room at Bridgewater Place, showing the large screen where your images will be shown.

—Dale Potter, Salon Coordinator

From microscopes to micro four-thirds — SANP Board Member Gretchen Kaplan

by *David Boruff*

Gretchen Kaplan's most treasured childhood possession wasn't her Brownie camera. It was her microscope, with which she explored the intricacies of the ultimate macro subjects: blood cells and other tiny objects mere millionths of an inch across.

Today, Gretchen's eye for detail has made her an award-winning photographer of considerably larger subjects – a skill she didn't have time to hone until much later in life.

Gretchen's early interest in microscopy – and perhaps a bit of genetics, too – presaged her career in medicine. She was born in Illinois coal country, where her grandfather was both a coal miner and a pharmacist.

"He never practiced, as far as I know," Gretchen says. "But I saw his certification."

A job opportunity for Gretchen's dad brought her family to Knoxville, where she spent her formative years and cultivated a school age interest in science. In this period of her life, photography was not a major interest.

"I had a Brownie camera as a child, but I didn't do much with it," Gretchen says. "I wasn't really that excited about it. I was a lot more excited about the microscope that my parents got me. I took it to elementary school and we looked at blood cells and stuff."

A career in medicine

With an academic bent, Gretchen went on to earn bachelor's and master's degrees in Kentucky and California. Accompanied by her husband, Herschel – whom she married in San Francisco – she returned to Tennessee for medical school and then stayed in Knoxville for her residency in OBGYN.

Like many young doctors, Gretchen found that her round-the-clock schedule as an obstetrician didn't leave much time for outside interests. Even a rare holiday in Peru, for which she bought a Canon camera, couldn't enable an enduring passion for photography.

"I worked all the time, seeing patients all day, and then when I was off I played tennis, which was more important to me than photography," she says. "I didn't really get into photography until I retired."

Today, Gretchen's photographic interests run a wide gamut: nature photography, certainly, but other subjects, too. "I recently joined another camera club because I wanted to branch out into something beyond nature photography. I want to get into minimalism. And now that we've moved downtown, I'd like to try street photography and still life," she says.

"I spent two days last weekend photographing the bicycle race in downtown Knoxville. I'm currently trying to figure out how to get my images from the camera wirelessly to a new iPad. I'll let you know how that works out."

Bears, birds & bicycles

Even as she expands her repertoire, Gretchen professes a persistent soft spot for birds – and bears. "Initially, I enjoyed shooting bears," she says. "I've been to Alaska five times shooting brown bears and black bears. And then I got into birds."



South Carolina lighthouse (infrared 850nm).
Copyright Gretchen Kaplan.



Southern Railway station, downtown Knoxville. *Copyright Gretchen Kaplan.*

SANP BOARD, INTERVIEW WITH GRETCHEN KAPLAN

(con't from p.5)

"Birds are beautiful, and they do such interesting things. I just really like them, and I like going places where different kinds of birds live, like wading birds in California."

Gretchen's interest in birds is also driven in part by her concern about how climate changes might be affecting their lives. "Birds are dying off because of climate change and what we're doing to the air," she says. "I recently encountered a cardinal lying dead on a golf course."

Learning her craft

Like many SANP members, Gretchen says non-credit photography courses at the University of Tennessee helped her learn her craft. She especially credits the popular introductory course by Tom Geisler, Colby McLemore's Lightroom class, and Larry Perry's Photoshop course.

More recently, though, Gretchen says she is increasingly self-taught, relying heavily on online courses taught by attractive instructors. (Editor's note: yes, she really said that.)

"For me teachers have to be really entertaining, really good looking, or have the ability to teach. One of those three is a must! Then I fiddle around with the techniques or software until I figure out what I want to do."

Gretchen says she prefers to put her emphasis on getting the image right in camera. "I look at the image I get out of the camera as being basically what I want," she says. "I go through the basic steps for polishing what's there, but I don't get real fancy with post-processing."

Tools of choice

Gretchen has come a long way since her childhood Brownie. Today, her tools of choice are micro four-thirds cameras from Olympus. "I love the light weight of the Olympus and the ease of use. It has a lot of in-camera features I love, including seven stops of image stabilization, so it's easy to hand-hold unless I'm using a really big lens."

Gretchen is embracing technology in more ways than one. "I recently converted my first Olympus to infrared," she says.

SANP's - and Gretchen's - future direction

As a new Board member, Gretchen says she likes where the club is headed. "The club is having a lot more field events now, and that is a good thing. Dale Potter is doing a really good job with that." Gretchen also has high praise for the instructional programs that Kendall Chiles continues to book for the club.

Gretchen says the COVID-19 pandemic took a toll on her photography. "It shut me down," she says. But she looks forward to getting out and photographing more. And when she does, you can be sure she'll be guided by what she says is some of the best advice she ever received.

"One of the first photography trips I took was to the Rocky Mountains with a man who told me, 'Show only your best because you are judged by your worst.'"

"This is good advice to remember."



Brandt's Cormorant. Copyright Gretchen Kaplan.



Alaskan Black Bear. Copyright Gretchen Kaplan.

Want to share an interesting field experience or other information with fellow members? Email sanpinfo@sanp.net and include a short description and some photos.

ELEMENTS

LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

design. Carefully curated by the same team that brings you the Medium Format Magazine. The experience allows you to stand alongside a photographer in the field as they see and craft their image. This genuine experience of landscape photography is at the core of ELEMENTS Magazine and we cordially invite you to join us on this adventure."

Dennis Sabo: My new colorful series of impressionistic hybrid Day Lilies has just been released and uploaded on my website in my [Abstract gallery](#). Colors, textures, and natural flower patterns abound in this contemporary impressionistic series. Prints are available on my website. Metal prints and Giclee canvas wraps can be purchased by contacting me directly.



All aglow. Copyright Dennis Sabo.

SANP BOARD MEETS AUGUST 9 AT 7PM

If you have a question or issue to bring before the Board, contact [Ed Stickle](#), President, 48 hours before the meeting. An issue may be presented in person (via Zoom for now) if you wish, as long as the president knows that's your preference.

If you want to attend a Zoom Board of Directors meeting (even if you have no issues to bring forward), email [Sharon](#) to get the Zoom link. Read minutes from [June](#) meeting and other past [meetings](#).

Membership Renewal

To renew your membership, go to your online [profile](#) on the SANP website and click the button labeled "Renew to mm/dd/yyyy." Follow the prompts to pay by credit card. If you want to pay by check, click the "Invoice me" button, and follow the instructions on the invoice. Questions? Contact Brad Cottrell at sanpmembership@gmail.com.

Your participation is needed

The SANP Board of Directors recently learned that the Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church in Knoxville will be reopening its Watershed Building for meetings as of August. If you are a member of SANP, you should have received an email requesting that you complete a short survey to share your opinion about meeting again in person. If you have not yet completed that survey, please take a few minutes to let the Board know how you feel.

If for some reason you didn't see the email, here's a link to the survey:

<https://sanp.net/Sys/Poll/26500>

You'll be asked to log in before you see the survey, and you can only complete it once. Your responses are anonymous.

Should you have questions about the survey or about any aspect of meeting again in person, please contact [Ed Stickle](#), president, or one of the SANP Board members.

Why Use Focus Stacking? *by Ron McConathy*

Focus stacking is defined on Wikipedia as a digital image processing technique that combines multiple images taken at different focus distances to give a resulting image with a greater depth of field (DOF) than any of the individual source images.

Except for special effects, most photographers want their subjects to be in focus with out-of-focus soft backgrounds while maintaining a reasonable shutter speed and low ISO. In landscape images, a sharp focus from foreground to background is preferred. Focus stacking is a technique where individual images having a portion of the scene in focus are combined in software to produce increased DOF in the final image. This technique can be used in close-up and landscape photography, with a few limitations, allowing the photographer to generate the desired DOF for the best artistic merit or subject detail.

Landscape focus stacking is often used to create sharpness from the immediate foreground to the horizon; this is typically achievable using from 2 to 10 individual images. Close-up/macro focus-stacked photographs can show details of an entire small subject; this usually needs more images, from 5 to 50, or more. Close-up/macro focus-stacked series can be a challenge to manually create due to the very small DOF required between images. Each image of a focus-stacked series contains a different area of the scene that is in focus, and all the individual images as a group contain in-focus areas of the whole scene. The multiple images are combined in software to form the final photo. The image series can be made by manually adjusting the focus for each image across the scene, or some cameras can automatically create the image series based on user inputs.

DOF is normally increased by using a larger f-stop, but f-22 or larger can cause diffraction which then blurs the image, and this negates the gained increase in sharpness. Also, using a larger f-stop requires a longer exposure time which may cause blurry images. Focus stacking allows the use of the f-stop that gives the sharpest image for the lens used, typically around f-8, and it allows you to shoot with the best aperture and shutter speed combination to get a sharp series of images from front to back of the subject.

Any camera and lens combination that can be easily manual focused or has an automatic focus-stacking option can be used for focus stacking. The lens used must be able to focus on the subject, whether a broad scenic or macro. A camera shutter release is useful to prevent camera shake. A tripod is usually necessary to maintain the framing between individual images and to avoid camera motion during long exposures, but I have been successful in hand holding a focus-stacked image series when the software aligns the individual images prior to stacking them.

Warning: In the composition, any random movement of things that occurs between images in a series will not align in the final image, likely making the image unusable (i.e., wind-blown leaves or flowers). Some software will correct for slight movement of the whole subject between images in a series (such as a single flower against an out-of-focus background), and this can make reasonably steady hand-holding of a single subject possible.

Some Nikon, Olympus, Panasonic, and Fujifilm cameras have a 'focus bracketing' or 'focus stacking' feature. Check to see if your camera, or one you are interested in, has this feature. Processing a focus-stacked series of images is not the most difficult part of the technique. This link provides information on how to use Lightroom and Photoshop for focus stacking: <https://digital-photography-school.com/post-processing-focus-stacked-images/>. (article continued next page)



Thimbleweed closeup, focus stacked with 10 images.



Hawkweed seed head. Top: f-22, 1/10 sec, ISO 1600. Bottom: f-8, 1/80 sec, ISO 1600, focus stacked with 12 images. All photos copyright Ron McConathy.

TIP: Mark the start or end of a focus-stacked image series by holding your hand in front of the lens and making an exposure.

Future 2021 Club Meetings

Aug 31 TBD
 Sept 28 TBD

SANP Officers

President: [Ed Stickle](#), 865-405-8143
 Vice President: Open
 Secretary: Charles Samuels
 Treasurer: Sharon Cottrell

Volunteer Managers

Community Outreach: [Ron Sentell](#)
 Field Events: [Dale Potter](#)
 Historian: Open
 Membership: [Brad Cottrell](#)
 Newsletter: [Sharon McConathy](#)
 Programs: [Kendall Chiles](#)
 Salon: [Dale Potter](#)
 Social Media: [Chris Cannon](#)
 Website: [Sharon McConathy](#)
 Workshops: Open

Board of Directors

The Board meets 2nd Monday each month.

2019-2021:	Sharon Cottrell Charlie Samuels Ron McConathy
2020-2022:	David Boruff Kristina Plaas Kent Sauter
2021-2023:	Chris Cannon Gretchen Kaplan Marcy Wielfaert

Why Use Focus Stacking? *(con't from p. 7)*

[Helicon Focus](#) is the software I selected, and it is easy and effective to use with Lightroom CC. It offers a 30-day free trial period and tutorials. The license cost varies from \$30 to \$240.

[Zerene Stacker](#) describes itself as “focus stacking software designed specifically for challenging macro subjects and discerning photographers. Of course, it works great with simpler subjects, close-ups, and landscapes also!” It also has a 30-day free trial period and tutorials. The license costs from \$39 to \$289.

These are the three most popular software programs for focus stack image processing, but others may also exist.

YouTube offers a plethora of videos on focus stacking techniques and processing. Pick recent videos to get ‘state of the art’ advice.

In summary, photographers have often wanted to easily create sharp images from near to far without using large f-stops, slow shutter speeds, or high ISO settings. Sometimes the technically possible DOF is not able to include all of a subject. Focus stacking can solve these problems and give amazing results. This is definitely a photography skill you need to add to your bag of camera tricks.

“You don’t realize how hard photography is until you squat down to shoot from a cool angle and then have to figure out how to get back up.”

— [shootproof](#)



Trillium bud, 2021 Salon, 2nd Place, Plants
 Category. Copyright Ron McConathy.

CAMERA CLUB COUNCIL OF TENNESSEE (3CT)

SANP is a member club of 3CT, www.3ct.org, which is a network of photography clubs from across Tennessee and neighboring states. Their [monthly newsletter](#) (over 20 pages) includes information about meetings and events for member clubs. You can also visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CameraClubCouncilOfTennessee.