

SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN



NATURE PHOTOGRAPHERS

SANP News

Sharing the Awareness of Nature
through Photography

Visit us on the web at www.sanp.net

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May 2004

May Meeting:

Tom and Pam Cory Present

“The Nature of Travel”

Tom and Pat Cory have specialized in nature photography for many years. A few years ago a deal “too good to pass up” took them to Paris, a place they had never even thought of visiting. Then an opportunity to teach in Ireland came their way. Their most recent trip was to Panama and Costa Rica in late April. While they still have a passion for their nature travels in the U.S., they have discovered they also enjoy photographing the way people in other countries live. Foreign landscapes, ancient towns perched on the top of hills, colorful doors and windows, flowers, animals and birds, and details of the daily life of people in other places all make wonderful subjects. The Corys will talk about their recent travel experiences and their ideas about travel photography as they show slides and video from several different locations.

Tom and Pat have been involved professionally in photography for many years. Working as a husband/wife team, they conduct photography workshops locally, nationally and internationally. They also offer custom trips and individual lessons. Their work has been published in numerous calendars and publications such as *Outdoor Photographer*, *Nature Photographer*, and *Blue Ridge Country*. Tom displays his fine-art prints in the Gallery 1401 and the In-Town Gallery in Chattanooga. While they specialize in nature and travel photography, Tom also does environmental portraiture and weddings. Pat specializes in video and has produced a video on the building of the Coolidge Park Carousel in Chattanooga and a just-released DVD entitled “Visions of Nature,” 34 minutes of relaxing nature video set to hammered dulcimer music. They have published two books, *Scenic Chattanooga and Beyond*, a guide to natural areas within 75 miles of Chattanooga, and the 6th edition of their popular instructional book, *Notes from the Field*.

Tom and Pat have been members of SANP since the early days of the organization. It will be a pleasure to welcome them back and to enjoy one of their excellent presentations.

Upcoming Meetings

- June/July, no meetings, no newsletter
- August 31: Don McGowan
- October 26: Kendall Chiles and Harold Stinnette, Wildlife in Cades Cove

Our Summer Photo Assignment!

— Ron McConathy

Let's give ourselves a photo assignment for the summer: “Destination Photography,” the special category for the 2005 SANP Competition. As we travel this summer, either far away or close to home, we have a great opportunity to make photos of landscapes, places, or abstract images that capture the essence of our destination. People as the main subject are not allowed, but people can be in the picture. Several years ago I attended a workshop in Gatlinburg that featured Galen Rowell. Galen showed slides he made in just a few hours while passing through Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg. The two rolls of film he shot captured the feeling of the various tourist attractions and shops better than any images I had previously seen. They were suitable for a National Geographic publication.

If you are staying close to home this summer, you can still make good “destination” photographs. Old Town in Knoxville could be a good location! Open your eyes, notice what interests you, and then capture it on film or digital media. Perhaps one reason vacation photos are often prize winners is that we take time to focus on making good pictures. So, no matter our destination, let's set aside time for photography, and perhaps those images will be winners, too!

This competition category could be a challenge for some of us who prefer wildflowers and scenics, but stretching our photographic creativity will help us become better overall photographers. This summer is a great time to capture that winning “Destination” image, so don't wait!

Member News

Don't be shy! Notify the newsletter editors, mconathy@aronsha.com, if you have a service to offer members, have been honored, or have achieved something noteworthy. This is your newsletter—let others know what you are doing in photography.

Additional SANP Winners at the Dogwood Arts Photography Competition

Your newsletter editors regret having omitted two members who were winners in the recent Dogwood Arts Photography Competition. Congratulations to **Scott Watson** on two honorable mentions and to new member **Bob Quinn** on three honorable mentions! By the latest count, SANP members won 39 awards, 14 of which were 1st, 2nd, or 3rd places.

SANP Officers and Committee Chairs

President	Lee Ownby	865.690.8460
Treasurer	Joyce Wilson	
Secretary	Gloria Epperson	
Membership	Alice Reed	865.483.4461
Programs	Brad Cottrell	
Newsletter	R/S McConathy	865.376.3976
Workshops/Trips	Kendall Chiles	865.693.2448
Salon 2005	Mark Frankel	
Publicity	Open (any volunteers?)	
Web Site	Thom Ashton	

Elected Board Members:

Chuck Cole	Ron McConathy
Brad Cottrell	Alice Reed
Gloria Epperson	Margarete Ohnesorge
Mark Frankel	Clay Thurston
Shawn Grant	

The SANP Board meets monthly. If you have issues you would like the board to discuss, contact Lee Ownby, leeownby@mindspring.com.

SANP News is published monthly except June and July to provide information to members. Articles or ideas from the membership are welcome.

Newsletter Deadline: First of each month

Send submissions to mcononathy@aronsha.com

SANP mailing address:

P.O. Box 32324, Knoxville, TN 37930-2324

Link to a Photo Slide Show

The following link is to a short, enjoyable slide show with written words and music:

<http://wonderofitall.com/>

This is a good example of how to use those beautiful nature images to inspire others. We don't know how the show was prepared, but it is effective. (The link passed our computer's security checks, and our computer is still working after playing the show; thus, it should be safe.)

Tennessee Aquarium After-hours Field Trip

Refer to the February 2004 SANP newsletter for details on this field trip. If you haven't signed up already, contact Kendall Chiles. If we get a few more interested people, we could have an SANP-only field trip. Otherwise, each person must call the Aquarium at 423.267.FISH to sign up and pay for this trip.

*President's Corner***Photography and Travel Obsessions**

—Lee Ownby

With each May program, we know that summer is just around the corner; and for those us with children, another photographic vacation opportunity may be only days away. Travel will be the special category in this year's salon, and this affords all of us the chance to focus on what gets us to those special places.

Some people collect coupons. I hoard frequent flyer miles. The cereal I eat for breakfast is based on whether or not I can obtain miles off the box. As long as I don't have to pay more, I look for the value-added miles. Some credit cards offer bonus miles if you eat at certain restaurants. My palate can be satisfied at many places, but if they offer more miles, then that restaurant moves to the top of the list.

Payment of my sons' college tuition and fees has generated a lot miles. Each spring, we look at our mileage balance and start planning a fall trip that can be taken as result of those college miles.

Before 9/11, we planned our family vacations with the expectation that we would be bumped. I would discuss with our airline agent the most heavily traveled routes and times to our destinations, and then schedule accordingly. Then, we would volunteer at check-in, so that we would be one of the first to be selected if the flight was over-booked as expected. For nearly three years straight, we traveled to many places at minimum cost. Now, after 9/11, it is more difficult, but still doable. It just takes more effort.

My disclosure of this obsession is illustrative of an important tool in nature and travel photography. Somehow you have to get from point A to point B, and while some wonderful shots may be taken in your backyard, you have to admit that your eye does occasionally stray to a photo of an exotic place. Reducing the cost of getting there means getting there more often. For me, serious photography often means inclusion of family members as porters, models, companions or whatever. And those type of photographs will be much more meaningful when connected to a family, memory-building event.

To help us focus on this year's travel category, Tom and Pat Cory will bring us an exciting program this month. They have recently returned from Costa Rica and Panama and will have a lot to share with us about this trip. Please plan to be at the next meeting and prepare for a year focusing on the many exciting possibilities of travel with your camera.

St. Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park

—Chuck Cole

There is a little known place in St. Augustine, Florida, that could be one of the best spots in the USA to photograph birds. Surprisingly, the name of the attraction is the St. Augustine Alligator Farm, sub-titled St Augustine's Zoological Park. It consists of several acres in a heavily populated section of town and is home to several species of birds, reptiles and amphibians.

The section that is of most interest to photographers is an area known as the Rookery, which covers about 2 acres of swamp and is periodically home to many hundreds of birds who gather each year to court, lay eggs, and raise young. Some of the birds that may be seen include roseate spoonbill, tri-colored heron, cattle egret, snowy egret, great egret and wood storks. Additionally, ibis and other species of herons and egrets may be found.

The mating rituals happen in mid to late April, and many nests soon contain from one to three eggs. Chicks start hatching within 2 weeks and staff personnel report that mid-May is an excellent time to view the chicks.

Wood storks have returned again in 2004, and there were 32 wood stork nests counted on April 16. They nest on top of the trees and spend most of their time atop one huge live oak.

The main reason given for the birds being here is that the approximately 65 American alligators living in the Rookery area protect the birds and chicks from land-based animals of prey such as raccoons and snakes. Of course, some of the birds and chicks do become food for the 'gators!

A 300-ft boardwalk meanders through the Rookery. In several places, the nests are within 3 feet of the boardwalk and may actually be too close to focus on them with a long lens. The boardwalk is wide enough for you to set up a tripod without interfering with other Rookery visitors.

You can travel very light when visiting the Rookery. A lens, such as the Canon 100-400MM, will be the only lens you need to carry as it will focus close and also be very useful for distant images or "flight" shots. A 1.4 or 2X tele-converter could also prove beneficial. A longer lens, such as a 500MM or 600MM, could be useful for those distance shots that arise.

The only filter suggested is a polarizer to reduce the shine on the leaves and water glare.

In addition to the Rookery, at various times throughout the day the facility offers several live shows featuring

macaws and other exotic birds. You may find the reptile show, the parrots and rainforest show and or the alligator show interesting. More than 900 alligators live within the fenced "Farm" area. Two white alligators can be seen and photographed as well as the other animals on display throughout the area. So a visit to the Alligator Farm could be a family event, with enough variety to interest everyone!

Normal operating hours at the Alligator Farm are 9 am to 5 pm with extended summer hours from 9 am to 6 pm. A Photographers Pass, valid for 1 year, is available for \$59.95 per person. As a Photographer Pass holder, you are permitted to enter the park at 8 am each day rather than having to enter along with everyone else at 9. Also, you are allowed to remain inside at least one more hour after regular paying patrons are required to leave.

Should you purchase a Photographers Pass, to get in early you *must* be at the "Red" door promptly at 8 am. The door is opened only long enough for those waiting in line to enter and then is immediately closed. Be late and you must wait for the normal opening of the facility.

I suggest that you be there at 8 am, photograph until about 10:30 am, then check out the other areas of the "Farm" or have lunch. Then maybe grab a nap and return about 4 pm and stay until they escort you out at night.

You can subscribe to the Alligator Farm's bird forum at Yahoo Groups by sending a blank email to: birdrookery-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

The Alligator Farm is located at 999 Anastasia Blvd. in St. Augustine, Florida. You can visit their web site at www.alligatorfarm.com. It contains a wealth of information and lists admission prices, discounts available (none on the Photographers Pass), a picture gallery, live Rookery cam (click on the box in lower left corner of the opening page) and many other specifics about the attraction.

Amanda Whitaker is the Curator of the Bird and mammal Department, and she also submits the daily Bird Rookery Group's email.

Your Contributions to the Newsletter are Welcomed!

Thanks to Chuck Cole for sharing with us the interesting and useful information on this page about the St. Augustine Alligator Farm. If you have a favorite spot for photography, send in a short article about it for publication in the SANP newsletter. This is a great way for members to share experiences (and it helps your newsletter editors as well)!

Here's our email address: mconathy@aronsha.com

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Southern Appalachian Nature Photographers is a nonprofit organization dedicated to “Sharing the Awareness of Nature through Photography.” The club meets the last Tuesday of every month except June, July, and December at the First United Methodist Church on Kingston Pike in Knoxville at 6:30 p.m. for social time and 7 for the program. Visitors are welcome!