



Urban Wildlife Photo Club

June 2024 Newsletter

Next Membership Meeting: **June 10th, 2024**

Online and In-Person meeting at 7:00 PM

**SEE PAGE 2 FOR MORE MEETING
INFORMATION**

Club Contact Information

Address: COUWPC
PO Box 270501
Louisville, CO 80027-0501
Email: uwpc@comcast.net Website <http://www.couwpc.com>

A Zoom link for the online meeting will be sent out a few days before the meeting and again as a reminder a few hours before the meeting.

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June Program

Kirk Fry is our June speaker. The program will be "**High-impact Black and White Nature Images - Capture and Post-Processing in Lightroom.**"

<https://www.kirkfryphotography.com/>

Meeting Location:

We will meet in person at Park Hill United Methodist Church at Montview and Glencoe. We'll also have a Zoom link I'll send out a few days before the meeting.

Parking is off Glencoe, north of the church. Enter through the double doors on the north side of the church. If no one is there, please do not ring the doorbell as that alerts several people from the church on their mobile phones. Text or call (303) 807-7678 or (303) 589-5414 and someone will come down and let you in.

How can you Help Our Club?

Hey folks. We sure would like more active participation in the club. There are many opportunities to join in. Tom, Al, Bob Stocker, Curtis are busy with websites, field trips, the Bemis show (Thanks to Laurie for starting us on that path) and so forth, so many thanks to them. Fred Krampetz does a great job with speakers! – many thanks. Julie Picardi has taken on the Club Facebook page – thanks Jules! Fred Stearns has filled in for me with meeting logistics, thank as well. I do a bit myself.



Colorado
Urban
Wildlife
Photo Club

We have a few other ways you can get involved that are pretty painless! Consider the Our Urban Wildlife website that Curtis administers. <https://oururbanwildlife.org/> . Check it out and see what opportunities there are to submit images, articles and location stories. Lots of good stuff is out there but we are always looking for more.

While you are at it, how about putting together an article for the newsletter? You could do one for both the website and the newsletter. Thanks to Alistair for a very interesting article on the history of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal in this edition of the newsletter.

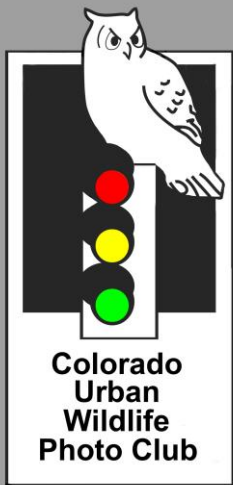
Participation in any organization can be fun and rewarding – UWPC is no different.

MEMBER MONTHLY IMAGE SUBMISSION

Members and first-time guests are encouraged to submit images for a gentle critique. We are not a competitive club, but we do strive to help our members learn and improve their photographic skills. Guidelines are below.

We have both open and theme image categories:
June Critique and Theme images due by June 3rd
Send to: uwpcimages@comcast.net

- June Theme – Mother and Child
- July Theme - Fences



PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS FOR IMAGE LABELING, ESPECIALLY THE USE OF SPECIAL CHARACTERS (NO @) AND NAMING NEEDS. If I get really busy, I may not be able to accept images that don't follow these "rules."

PLEASE ADHERE TO THE DATE & SIZE REQUESTED -1MB or less

Two categories at each meeting - THEMED AND OPEN

- Maximum of 4 images total and no more than one themed image
- Email files one week before the scheduled meeting to uwpcimages@comcast.net Please use this one!
- Send themed category images in an email titled 'themed images'
- Send open category images in an email titled 'critique images'
- If your image is selected to appear on the club website, the website caption will be derived from the file name. **Be sure that your name and the image title as you would like them to appear on the website are included in the file name.** Use only letters (a-z and A-Z), numerals (0-9), dashes (-), underscores (_), and the single dot before ".jpg" in file names. Avoid using blanks. Use dashes (-) underscores (_) and capitalization to indicate word boundaries (e.g. Bob_Dean-Trees_In_Snow.jpg or BobDean-TreesInSnow.jpg). It is acceptable to include other information that identifies the image in file names, but you risk the possibility that this information will be misinterpreted by the webmaster. Although it's unlikely, the image BobDean_TreesInSnow_27583.jpg might end up on the website with the title "Trees in Snow 27853."

MEMBER MONTHLY IMAGE SUBMISSION CONT'D

OPTIONAL Descriptive information for each *critique image* should be as follows:

Exposure data should, for example, include f/stop, shutter speed, ISO, any exposure compensation, and any filter information. Post processing enhancements should include only those things beyond simply cropping, sharpening, noise reduction, etc. such as HDR, panorama work, color enhancements, exposure changes, etc. If you can put the image data (if you choose to include it) **as text** in the body of the email as opposed to an attached word or excel file, it would be appreciated! Makes life easier if everyone does the same thing.

Sample table for exposure details

IMAGE	IMAGE TITLE	SPECIES	LOCATION	CAMERA	LENS	EXPOSURE DATA	POST PROCESSING ENHANCEMENTS
Critique 1							
Critique 2							
Critique 3							

Please don't use an @ in the exposure information as when I copy it into the slide presentation, the computer sees it as an email address, and I need to retype rather than copy.



PHOTO CONTESTS

Some thoughts on Photo Contests:

Whenever you think about entering a photo contest you should very carefully read the Ts and Cs. I know that the legalese can be daunting but there are a lot of contests out there that are a “rights grab.” Make sure that the ones you enter specifically lay out the image ownership agreement. Whenever you send in images to a contest you are entering into a contract. You really should consider only those contests that have very limited usage of your photos and state in their rules that YOU retain full ownership of the image. When you read the fine print on image usage, watch out for those contests that demand the right to use all your entries for their own purposes, not just the winners.

Any Contests I should include??

Contest Information Website;

If you'd like a resource that has just about all the contests out there, take a look at Photo Contest Insider at

<https://www.photocontestinsider.com/contest/all-themes/>



Field Trips

We have scheduled more 2024 field trips. Tom Loucks has done a great job setting up these trips. THANKS Tom!



- Field Trip to Duraplaq in Longmont after some shooting for fall color at Walden/Sawhill ponds in Boulder. Date is Oct 17th.
- Field Trip to Cumbres and Toltec Scenic RR
 - ✓ October 1st
 - ✓ 10:00 AM Train to Chama from Antonito
 - ✓ Dinner afterwards in Antonito at Dos Hermanas Mexican Restaurant.
 - ✓ You will need to make your own train and lodging reservations ASAP.
 - ✓ Train reservations: <https://cumbrestoltec.com/schedule/>
 - ✓ Several of us had already booked seats in the Deluxe car (Parlor was already full!). Coach should be available if Deluxe is full but HURRY!
 - ✓ Some of us have already booked rooms at the Hampton in Alamosa as well.



Bemis show

We are getting close to the July 1st start date for the Bemis show. We have a bunch of images that folks have agreed to submit.

Al has done a great job of balancing this with a lot of stuff in his busy personal life.

We hope to pin down all the final details soon and plan the “hanging of the art.”

Lakewood Photo Contest and Calendar Project

No news on this possible project. I do have a contact and we are trying to find a date when we can discuss possible UWPC participation. I hope to have news at the June meeting.

A photograph of a bison in a snowy prairie landscape. The bison is the central focus, shown in profile from the side, looking down. It has thick, dark brown fur and small, curved horns. The ground is covered in patches of snow and dry, yellowish-brown grass. In the background, there are rolling hills under a clear, light blue sky.

*Back Home On
the Range*

*"A cold wind blew across the prairie when the last buffalo fell"
Sitting Bull, Lakota Chief*

Back Home on the Range

By

Alistair Montgomery

It was a peaceful Sunday morning that day in Hawaii. On Oahu the clouds had settled on the mountain tops while a light breeze caressed a city that had begun to stir to meet the new day. Just before 8am the sky filled with incoming Mitsubishi Zero fighters and Carrier Bombers that blanketed the harbor where the U.S. Navy was moored. In a little over an hour 2,471 were dead and 19 ships damaged or destroyed, the USS Arizona still lying where it sunk that day. America's response was immediate. The next day the United States declared war on Japan. The Pentagon immediately initiated a crash program to find a location to build a chemical weapons plant, somewhere inland away from the coast to prevent attack from the sea. Denver, Colorado was the ideal site. It lay on the western border of the vast Great Plains, and it had the infrastructure and local population to build and operate the site. About 20,000 acres of land previously converted from prairie to agriculture was seized by Eminent Domain.



It took only 5 months for approval and 7 months to build it. The site was called The Rocky Mountain Arsenal. Chemical weapons were produced by the U.S Army from 1942 to 1982. In 1952 part of the site was leased to the Shell Oil Company for pesticide manufacture, principally DDT. All production operations stopped in 1982. The site

was added to the “Superfund” National Priorities List (NPL) in 1984 for restoration encouraged by the army discovery of healthy, nesting Bald Eagles. National Wildlife Refuge” would be added to the name after containment, disposal and destruction of the contamination was achieved. This is the story of the restoration that is continuing today and will continue for the foreseeable future.

Restoring the Land

So how does one return a short-grass prairie to what it once was before the soil and groundwater was destroyed by decades of domestic farming and polluted by toxic chemicals? The short answer is you can't. But you can restore it to close to its prior use by deep well disposal; offsite chemical disposal; excavating and landfilling heavily contaminated soils; blocking contaminated groundwater flow with impermeable slurry walls or in-situ treatment with permeable ones; pump and treat of plumes of contamination to restore groundwater quality. Then re-population with the "keystone" animals, that created and sustained the habitat for other species. Then there's the ongoing replacement of invasive plants and grasses with native ones and control of the animal population to maintain a balanced environment. It's a task in perpetuity for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service USFWS.

"Build It and They Will Come"



Buffalo (Bison) came home to the Refuge in 2007, about 16 in all from the National Bison Range in Montana. These magnificent animals were the keystone when millions of them roamed over the Great Plains in long-past times until they were almost exterminated by

Europeans in the 19th century. Their sharp hooves would break up dead plant litter and air the soil. They would feed on native plants and restore them with their dung. They would create wallows that would later fill with rainwater when they rolled on the ground before the rut and in the spring to rub off their winter coat. Above all, they would be sacred to the Native American population who once relied on the buffalo for their very survival. The herd has grown to 250 animals in 2024 through calf births and imports from other locations. Black-tailed Prairie Dog burrows were moved away from the contamination and became a prime food source for carnivores. And the animals came back in droves. Mule and whitetail

deer along with coyote, raptor bald eagles, falcons, barn owls and burrowing owls and numerous songbird species, especially the Western Meadowlark that serenades the coming of spring with its musical trill. American pelicans, Kingfisher, blue herons, a variety of ducks and other waterfowl migrate to the ponds in the spring and summer months.

Perhaps the greatest challenge has been restoring the balance between native vegetation and animal population. Tackling the flora/ fauna balance has involved constructing experimental plots to study native and invasive vegetation, controlled burns and reseeded, managing prairie dog populations that feed on and spread forbs and other invasive plants and treating and eliminating prairie dog plagues that affect predators. In the past few years, the refuge has scored a win/win by introducing the

Black- Footed Ferret that was thought to be extinct for prairie dog control. A single black footed ferret can eat 100 prairie dogs in a year!



There is an ongoing review and maintenance of the condition of the landfills and to assess actions that may be needed to cope with climate change and peripheral urban development.

Swainson's Hawk with Prairie Dog Kill

Currently, (2024) an assessment is being made of storm water discharge from adjacent industrial concrete pads and the rooftops of residences crowding the Arsenal border that created gullies impacting the roaming patterns of the buffalo.

Was it Worth It?

The Great Plains once occupied 500,000 square miles all the way from Canada to Mexico and Missouri to the Rocky Mountains. Is the restoration of a mere 15,000 acres of Short Grass Prairie worth it? The Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife

Refuge is a living museum where visitors can go back in time to experience what has been lost and can be restored. The refuge is open from dawn 'till dusk with no entry fee 365 days a year, except when managing prescribed burns, animal control and prairie dog plague outbreaks. There are 10 miles of hiking trails and a self-guided circular wildlife drive for viewing the bison and other species. Refuge employees and volunteers conduct guided tours and put on educational talks and programs for all ages at the Visitor Center. The thousands of visitors and the learning from educational programs will sustain support for the Refuge message far into the future.



Western Meadowlark

But it's also just a peaceful place away from the bustle to admire the mountains, the flora and fauna and imagine what it was like before "civilization" arrived so many years ago.

Yes, it was, and is, well worth it.



PostScript

The Rocky Mountain Arsenal Website Is here:

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky-mountain-arsenal>

Information on school educational programs at the Refuge can be found here:

<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/rocky-mountain-arsenal/school-programs>

A gallery of photos I've taken at the refuge over the years can be found here:

<https://www.alistairmontgomeryjourneys.com/arsenal>