



VIEWFINDER THE NEWSLETTER

Alaska Society of Outdoor and Nature Photographers

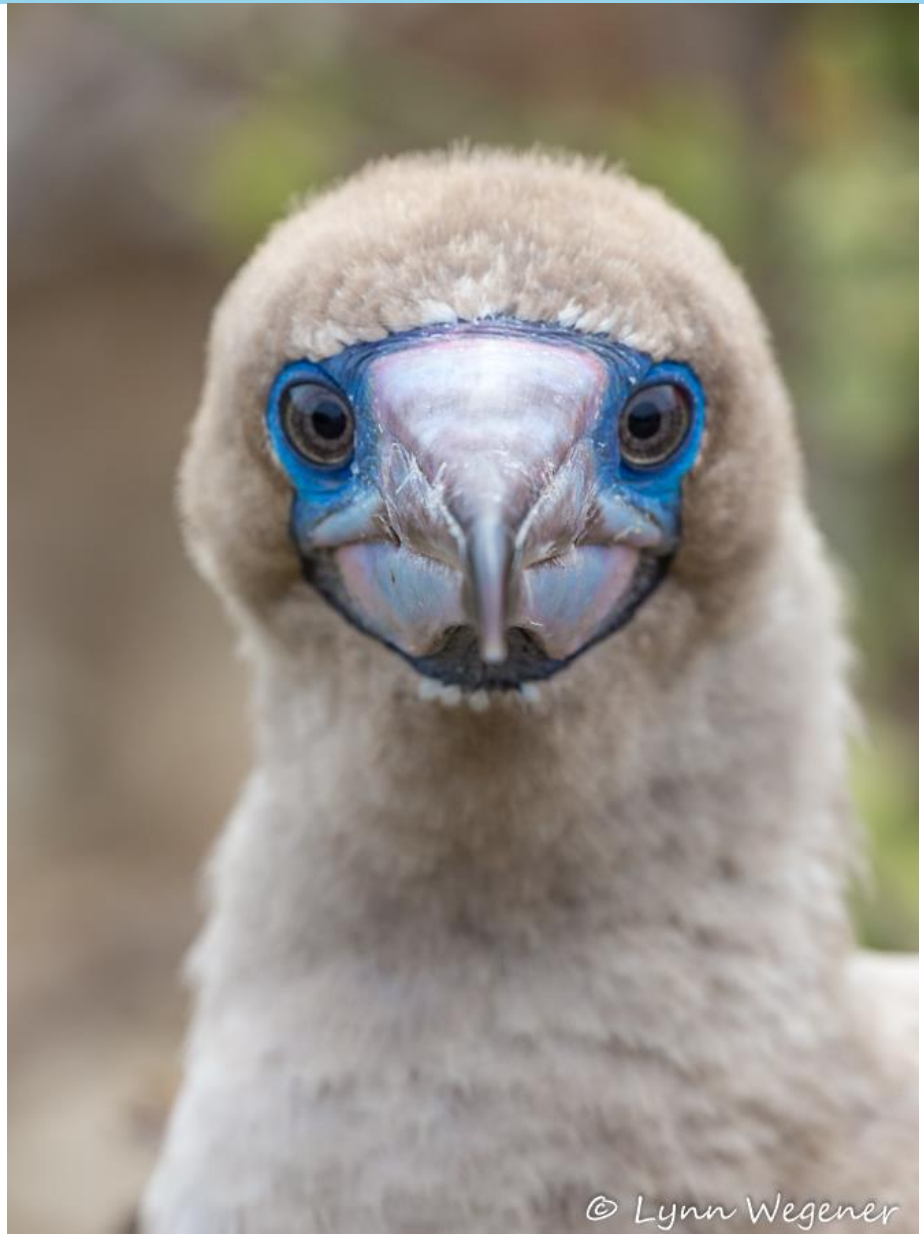
June/July 2018
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www.asonp.org

GALAPAGOS *by Lynn Wegener*

Located 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador are the volcanic islands of the Galapagos. Uniquely situated in strong sea currents carrying nutrients, the islands support an unusual collection of sea and land wildlife, many not found in other parts of the world. Of their "Big 15" we were able to photograph nesting Albatross; Blue-footed, Red-footed and Nazca Bobbies; Frigate birds; Land and Marine Iguana; Galapagos Hawk, Sea Lion, Fur Seal and Penguin; and the iconic Galapagos Giant Tortoise.

There are 12 principal islands and some smaller rocks in the archipelago with several of the islands populated. About 25,000 residents live in the islands, mainly in three communities. Most visitors tour the islands via of boat as we did. After flying from Quito, the capital of Ecuador, we landed on the island of Baltra where we met our ship. The "La Pinta" holds 48 passengers and is 210 feet. Each tour operator has designated times they can conduct tours on the various islands, thus ensuring a small group experience and minimal disruption to the wildlife. Park regulations require that all tourist activities be accompanied by a licensed Naturalist guide and each of our guides would lead 12-15 passengers. The ship traveled at night between the islands and we visited different inlet beaches via "panga" (inflatable zodiacs) in both morning and later afternoon. The choice of activities included hikes, snorkeling, glass bottom boats, and kayaking excursions. Our guides were fluent in English and Spanish.

The birds and mammals are some of the most photographable I have experienced, due in part to the lack of predators



© Lynn Wegener

Red-footed Booby, Canon 5D III, 100-400mm, ISO 250, f8

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AlaskaWild Photography Exhibit Schedule

June 1 – July 25, 2018:	Island and Oceans Visitor Center 95 Sterling Hwy, Homer, AK 99603
July 29 – Sept. 30, 2018:	Jitters 11401 Old Glenn Hwy #107, Eagle River, AK 99577
Oct. 3 – Oct. 26, 2018:	Venue 514 2nd Ave, Fairbanks, AK 99701
Nov. 1, 2018 – Jan. 3, 2019:	Side Street Espresso 412 G St, Anchorage, AK 99501
Jan. 4 – Jan. 27, 2019:	Kaladi Brothers 6901 E Tudor Rd, Anchorage, AK 99507
Feb. 1 – Feb. 24, 2019:	Crush 328 G St, Anchorage, AK 99501
March 1 – Mar. 31, 2019:	Steam Dot at Williwaw 609 F St. Anchorage, AK

ASONP general membership meetings:

Held the second Tuesday of each month from October through May at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium at the Anchorage Museum, Rasmuson Center. We will have an exciting and interesting series of speakers lined up for our monthly meetings this coming year beginning in the fall of 2018.

June thru September:	Summer break—no general meetings
October 9 :	Member's Images
November 13:	Daryl Pederson—Prince William Sound
December 11:	Gayle Neufeld—Africa Trip
January 8:	Aurora Dora—Northern Lights in Talkeetna
February 12:	Jackie Sawyer—Bohemian Waxwing Bird Photography
March 12:	Roy Corral—A 50-year Odyssey of a Photojournalist
April 9:	AlaskaWild 2019 Exhibit photos showcased
May 14:	to be determined

WORKSHOPS, OUTINGS, & OTHER INTERESTS

Harriman Fjord Tour

Join **Michael DeYoung** in this one-day 10-hour+ photo-driven photo tour in **Harriman Fjord** on Wednesday, **July 16**, from 8 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. in collaboration **with Lazy Otter Charters**. Not only is this photo-driven, the boat is exclusive to our group of photographers and we stay at least 2 hours longer in Harriman Fjord than typical charters.

We board the Explorer which has an open back deck, bow hatch for forward viewing, bow landing capabilities, and onboard restroom. Keep an eye out for marine wildlife as we travel to Harriman Fjord where we find 5 tidewater glaciers, icebergs, spectacular waterfalls, wildflowers and massive peaks of the Chugach Mountains thrusting 8,000 feet above the water.

Along the way and once in Harriman Fjord, there will be ample opportunities to capture glaciers and mountain views as well as the possibility to photograph sea otters, birds, harbor seals, and other marine wildlife. We attempt our first planned beach landing in the morning to take advantage of the low tide where we stand a good chance of taking close-up photos of icebergs with glaciers and mountains in the background. The second planned beach landing presents opportunities to capture wildflowers and pools of water with Surprise Glacier and mountains in the background. The photo tour is limited to 6 people. **There are spots available.** A boxed lunch is provided as well as expert photography guidance. For more information or to register go to:

<https://deyoungphotoworkshops.com/alaska-photo-tours/glaciers-icebergs-wildflowers-up-close/>

Spencer Glacier Tour

Want a little more adventure? Join **Michael DeYoung** on this one-day 12-hour+ photo driven instructional tour at **Spencer Glacier** on **Tuesday, July 31**, from 7 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. in collaboration with **Ascending Path**.

We arrive on location via a very scenic ride on the Alaska Railroad to the remote Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop. From our remote stop off the highway, we travel 2 miles by van to Ascending Path's base camp along the shores of Spencer Lake where the landscape is usually dominated by wildflowers and icebergs with the glacier and surrounding Chugach Mountains as our backdrop.

Next, we kayak across Spencer Lake amidst icebergs, paddle to the shore near the glacier, put on crampons, and explore the glacier landscapes up close with a professional glacier and kayak guide. See and photograph crevasses and a high likelihood of ice caves (conditions permitting).

We return on the 8:15pm train returning to Girdwood.

The photo tour is limited to 10 people. **There are spots available.** Lunch, kayaks, paddling gear, and glacier hiking gear is provided as well as expert photography guidance. For more information or to register go to:

[SPENCER GLACIER ADVENTURE](#)

WORKSHOPS, OUTINGS, & OTHER INTERESTS, continued

Michael DeYoung Private Instruction

Wanting to take your photography to a higher level? Michael offers private one-on-one instruction session to help individuals become a better, more empowered, creative and confident outdoor photographer. He is available for consultations in Alaska June 27 - August 1. Learn more at:

[PRIVATE INSTRUCTION](#)

Eddie Soloway Workshop

Eddie Soloway's photographs are the expression of his passion for the natural world. In 1998, he received the Excellence in Photographic Teaching Award presented by the Santa Fe Center for Photography, and in 2010 Photo District News named Eddie one of America's best photography workshop teachers. In 2014 he was one of twenty photographers selected into the international "Power of the Image" exhibition which premiered in Beijing. He divides his time between speaking on photography and creativity for National Geographic and other organizations, teaching for leading photographic institutions, making fine-art prints, and publishing photographic projects. His book, *One Thousand Moons*, was published in 2004, the dvd, *A Natural Eye Workshop*, in 2009, and *A Natural Eye* video series in 2015. His workshops and educational offerings may be seen at www.anaturaleye.com

JULY 13-15, 2018

LOCATION: EAGLE RIVER NATURE CENTER

COST \$400

DEPOSIT \$100 WITH BALANCE DUE IN APRIL

THIS IS FOR WORKSHOP ONLY, NO LODGING IS INCLUDING

For more information or to sign up for this workshop, please contact Cathy Hart at:

cathylynnhart@gmail.com

Sam Abell Workshops

Sam Abell (born 1945 in Sylvania, Ohio) is an American photographer known for his frequent publication of photographs in *National Geographic*. He first worked for *National Geographic* in 1967, and is one of the more overtly artistic photographers among his magazine peers. Sam Abell's style of photography is documentary in the sense that his major avenue, the *National Geographic* magazine, is a publication of record. However, his best work is known for its transcendent qualities, starting at the documentary level yet open to interpretation on an aesthetic level.

AUGUST 29-31 or SEPTEMBER 1-3, 2018

(Both dates are identical workshops)

LOCATION: HOMER, ALASKA, LANDS END RESORT

COST: \$450

DEPOSIT \$100 WITH BALANCE DUE IN APRIL.

THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE LODGING.....

LANDS END IS GIVING A DISCOUNT TO WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS. CONTACT THEM DIRECTLY FOR RESERVATIONS AND JUST MENTION ASONP.

For more information or to sign up for this workshop, please contact Cathy Hart at:

cathylynnhart@gmail.com

WORKSHOPS, OUTINGS, & OTHER INTERESTS, continued

Juniper Workshops

Juniper Workshops (Juniperworkshops.com) is offering an amazing opportunity to strengthen your photography skills while on an Alaskan adventure, exploring the Katmai coast on an Alaskan crab boat from Sept 26 to Oct 2, 2018. There will be trips to the coast for bear viewing, photography and landscape hikes. This workshop will be taught by Paul Taggart, a photojournalist who has worked everywhere from Antarctica to Congo. He will share his passion for photography and his love for Alaska, sending you home with great images as well as a new found excitement for your own photography.

You'll arrive via float plane to our boat which will already be anchored off of Shelikof Strait. This will provide a comfortable and safe base perfectly suited for the exploration of the Katmai coast. We will explore the coast with frequent trips into a number of bays. There will be daily critique sessions and one-on-one instruction. The voyage will conclude in Kodiak.

The schedule for this trip is jam-packed with opportunities to explore Alaska and see wildlife including bears.

September 26, 2018

Arrive in Homer, AK. Explore Homer and get acclimated to the time change. There will be a group dinner in town, allowing everyone to get acquainted with your photography instructor. We'll be able to address any specific desires you have for the trip and allow your instructor to get familiar with your photographic goals for the coming days.

September 27, 2018

Meet at the Beluga Lake Seaplane Base. We will be taking two float planes to Geographic Harbor in Shelikof Strait, where our boat will be anchored. After everyone is settled into their cabins, we will have a group dinner, look over charts showing the detailed plans for the voyage based on current weather conditions. We'll stay in Geographic Harbor overnight and the skiffs will be available to explore the area. The unique landscape of Geographic Harbor is spectacular, with a prehistoric, jurassic feel.

September 27– October 1, 2018

Exploration of various bays and inlets in the area via skiff with our guide.

October 2, 2018

We'll supply transportation to Kodiak Airport for your return flight home. For an additional fee, the tour can be expanded on land around Kodiak Island or via sea in a smaller vessel.

The cost for this Alaskan adventure is \$6,900. For more information about this workshops and to sign up visit <http://www.juniperworkshops.com/alaska-workshop/katmai-photography-cruise1>

What's included: Float plane flight from Homer, AK to the boat including all lodging and meals while you're on board our boat. In-town group dinner in Homer and in Kodiak.

What's not included: Your flights into Homer and departing Kodiak. Your transportation to the Beluga Lake Seaplane Base. Travel insurance, we recommend you purchase travel insurance for the workshop.

John DeLapp has announced that he has completely revised his website and it now includes many new images with galleries on Denali, Wildlife, Birds, B&W, Infrared, Humanity, Landscapes, Sports, and Variety. Also included are links that allow viewing all his PhotoFile magazines and many of the "Dear John" articles that have been published in earlier Viewfinders.

See at: www.delappphotography.com

All images © Lynn Wegener

and the number of tourists viewing them daily. Tourism is still relatively low but has increased from 10,000 in 1980 to approximately 200,000 per year now.

It is a wonderful place to visit and photograph, both on land and under water. Maybe this UNESCO World Heritage Site should be on your bucket list, if not already?

* * *



Nesting Male and Female Frigatebirds



Sea Lion Pup



Galapagos Giant Tortoise



Short-eared Owl



© Lynn Wegener

Sea Lions and Tourists, Canon 5D III, 24-105mm, ISO100, f7.1

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© Lynn Wegener

Sally Lightfoot Crab, Canon 5D III, 100-400mm, ISO 320, f8

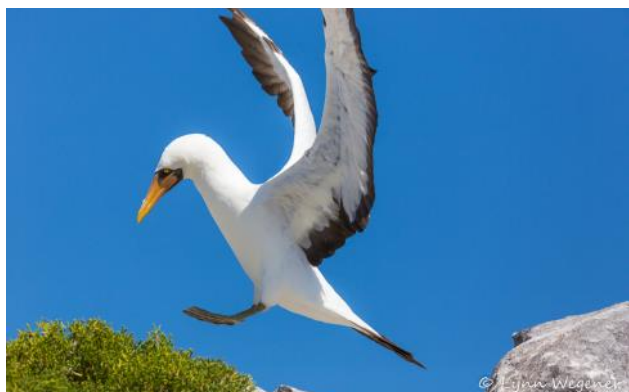


© Lynn Weg

Red-footed Booby preparing to feed chick, 5D-III, 100-400mm, ISO640, f8



Land Iguana, 5D-III, 100-400mm, ISO 400, 7.1



© Lynn Wegener

Nazca Booby, 5D-III, 100-400mm, ISO320, f8

All photos © Lynn Wegener



Input Devices

Unless you're using a display with "touch" capability, computer programs (apps) function through a cursor controlled by some sort of input device—mouse, trackpad, trackball, joystick, pointing stick (like the IBM/Lenovo TrackPoint), or perhaps (for creatives) a Wacom graphic tablet. What works best for each individual is intensely personal and often driven by what you are most familiar with. Here's my favorite—a Kensington Expert Trackball (Wired) ([K64325](#)).



This device has been around for many years and while there's nothing particularly snazzy about it, the design and function suit my work perfectly and I've used it for so long I'd hate to give it up. The key feature is the large (55mm) ball surrounded by a scroll ring and four buttons (which can be customized if desired). I'm particularly sensitive to wrist stress and I've added a 1" foam "lift" under the bottom part of the trackball base so when it's placed on a mousepad with a wrist rest the surface of the unit is almost level and I can operate ball, scroll wheel, and buttons by fingertip with no bend at all in my wrist. Very comfortable.

This is a wired (USB) device which I've found to be exceedingly reliable. Every now and then the cursor action becomes erratic and I invert the housing to drop the ball into my hand and then gently wipe any lint that has collected around the sensors in the cup. Problem fixed. Kensington also makes a wireless model; I've not used it, but I've heard suggested the wired model is more consistent. Hard to say how long a "legacy" device like this will be available. If you find you like it, might be a good idea to get a spare.

* * *

Autofocus Micro-adjustments

By Ray Bulson



Are you old enough to remember the days when the only way to focus a lens was manually (prior to the early 80s)? Can you imagine tracking a bird in flight with manual focus while simultaneously striving for a proper exposure and good composition using film? Long-time professional wildlife photographers will tell you it was challenging and the keeper rate was low. Long before the digital photography revolution, one of the first leaps in camera technology involved autofocus (AF). Today there are sophisticated autofocus systems with multiple AF sensors (not the same as AF points), up to hundreds of AF points, phase and contrast detection, continuous and predictive AF for moving subjects, and even Sony's Eye AF for locking on eyes. We have come to rely on AF and expect it to be perfect every time. However, most of us can relate to wildlife photos that looked great in the field on the camera LCD only to find them soft and not quite in focus on the computer screen at home.

What causes poorly focused photos? Set aside the random ones that are usually attributable to poor technique. However, for those photos where the focus of a lens is consistently off the root cause may be in the manufacturing process. Every component in a camera

or lens has a manufacturing tolerance, or deviation from specifications. Those specifications can be a length, lens curvature, glass purity, response time, etc. In a perfect world all those tolerances would be zero. But tolerances are not zero. If we are lucky, when all manufacturing tolerances are taken into account in an assembled camera they will cancel each other out. Sometimes, however, they will reinforce each other in one direction or the other to produce an inaccurate result. Inaccurate autofocus falls into two categories: back-focus and front-focus. In back-focus photos the plane of focus is behind the selected AF focus point. Conversely, focus in front of the focus point is called front-focus. Several years ago camera manufacturers introduced AF micro-adjustment for photographers to correct for back- and front-focus problems. At first this capability was available only in flagship cameras. Now some prosumer and consumer cameras have AF micro-adjustment.

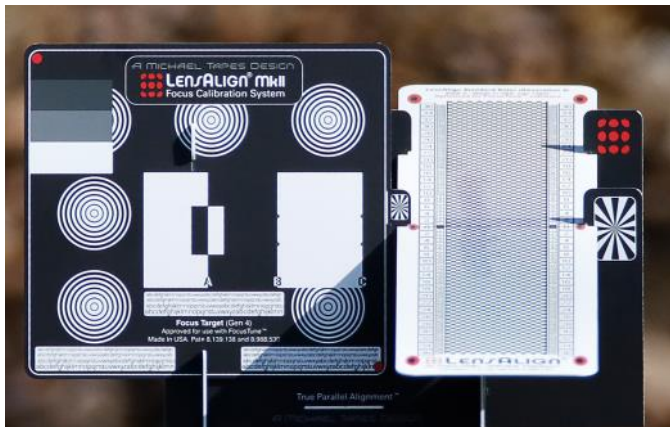
AF micro-adjustment allows the photographer to move the focusing plane forward for back-focus or back for front-focus. Techniques range from basic (fast and simple) to advanced (time consuming and more thorough). Most adjustments are done on the camera body's

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Autofocus Micro-adjustments, continued from page 9

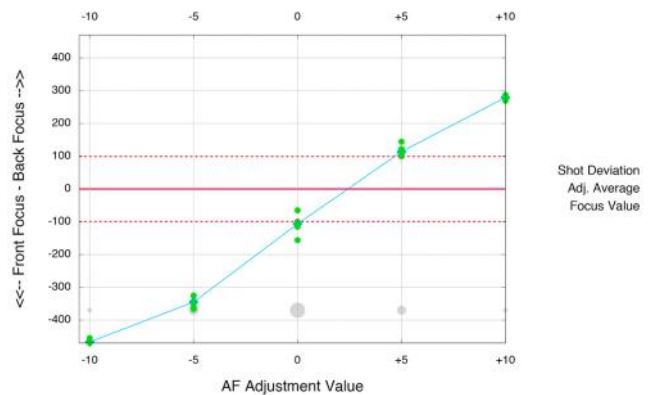
By Ray Bulson

AF system. At the most basic, a series of photos of a bullseye-like target are taken at several back-focus and front-focus settings and reviewed on a computer screen for sharpness. The optimum AF micro-adjustment is the one with the sharpest result. However, this is subjective and can be prone to error. Nikon's newest cameras have an automated adjustment called AF Fine-Tune. It uses contrast-detect AF in live view (focusing on the image sensor) to calibrate the phase-detect AF system. Adjustments to the lens itself are possible with certain Sigma Photo lenses using their Sigma USB Dock. This still requires the user to decide what the properly focused setting should be. At the advanced end of techniques is the LensAlign Focus Calibration System (lensalign.com).



The LensAlign hardware consists of a specially designed focusing target and ruler. Setup requires that the camera and target are perfectly aligned. A patented sighting system facilitates alignment. Furthermore, the camera and lens must be a predetermined distance from each other depending on the focal length of the lens. The longer the focal length, the farther apart the camera and target need to be. Two rounds of photos are taken. In Round 1, five photos at increments of five from -20 (back-focus) to +20 (front-focus) are taken by focusing on the target. The zero point on the ruler to the right of the focusing target is in the same plane as the target. Using the LensAlign FocusTune software, each photo is evaluated for sharpness and the data is regressed to produce a graph of the AF adjustment and the deviation of focus from the focusing plane. Where the line crosses the Y-axis represents perfect focus. In Round 2, the range of AF adjustment is narrowed to more accurately

determine the optimum AF adjustment for the lens. For example, in the plot below the optimum AF adjustment is 2 or 3.



The whole procedure is time consuming, however, it is an objective, rigorous way to properly calibrate AF systems. The optimum adjustment is then saved in the camera firmware. Because this value is specific to the particular camera body/lens combination, the procedure must be repeated for the same lens on another camera body. For zoom lenses the calibration procedure is done at the extremes of the zoom range. Canon allows both optimum adjustments to be used. Presumably for focal lengths in between the extremes some interpolation is done in-camera. For camera manufacturers that allow only one AF adjustment to be recorded, an average of the two extremes is probably best used.

I have calibrated *nearly* every camera body/lens combination using LensAlign. Nearly is the operative word because I primarily shoot landscapes with the camera mounted on a tripod and manually focus using live view with a loupe. So, some specialty wide angle lenses of mine, like those for astrophotography, remain uncalibrated. However, for wildlife photography, all my medium to long telephotos are calibrated. The photo of the hummingbird was taken with a 600 mm f/4 lens at f/5.6. Hummingbirds are difficult subjects to photograph because they are constantly moving. When they do rest on a limb it is not for long. Depth of field with an extreme telephoto lens is shallow. Combined with a small subject, like the hummingbird, the margin for autofocus error is very slim. Having a properly AF calibrated lens was critical to getting this shot, and for that my time was well spent in preparation.

* * *

All content and images © Ray Bulson

MEMBERS' PHOTOS

All photos © Ray Bulson



White Lady's Slipper, Wrangell-St. Elias N.P.



Wrangell-St. Elias National Park



Wrangell-St. Elias National Park



Foot bridge, evening light on summer solstice, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park

MEMBERS' PHOTOS

All photos © Harry Walker



MEMBERS' PHOTOS

All photos © Sanjana Greenhill



LOOKING TO SUBMIT TO THE *VIEWFINDER*?

Please consider submitting your story and/or photographs to be published in the *Viewfinder*. The *Viewfinder* is a member exclusive publication, written for members by members. The vision of this publication is to inform, inspire, and educate those interested in photography, especially outdoor and nature photography in Alaska. The success of the *Viewfinder* depends upon lively contribution from our Board, business members, and members. Submit text and photos as separate files; word.doc or .docx files for text, and photos should be jpeg format, sRGB color, sized for online use (approx. 1200 pixels on long side at 96 dpi, high compression level). Questions? Email to info@asonp.org.



ABOUT THE SOCIETY

The Alaska Society of Outdoor and Nature Photographers (ASONP) is a non-profit organization with the purpose of promoting individual self improvement in, and exchanging information about outdoor and nature photography, promoting ethics among outdoor and nature photographers, assisting members with marketing and selling their photographs, and informing and educating the public on outdoor and nature photography. Yearly membership is \$25 for individuals, \$35 for families, \$10 for students, and \$100 for business members. ASONP holds meetings at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month from October through May at the Anchorage Museum at Rasmuson Center, 121 West 7th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska. The public is welcome to attend all meetings.

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www.waydecarroll.com

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Juniper Workshops

shannon@juniperworkshops.com



ALASKA SOCIETY OF OUTDOOR & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHERS

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP YET?

2018 ASONP Membership Application

Name _____ Home Phone _____

Address _____ Work Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

email _____

Web Site _____

____ New Member? ____ Renewal (same email & address?) ____ Yes ____ No

The Viewfinder newsletters are sent by email 10 times a year in PDF format

WE TAKE CREDIT CARDS AT THE MEETINGS!

DUES: Individual (\$25) _____ Family (\$35) _____

Student (\$10) _____ Business (\$100) _____

Make checks payable to ASONP and mail to:

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Anchorage, AK 99503**