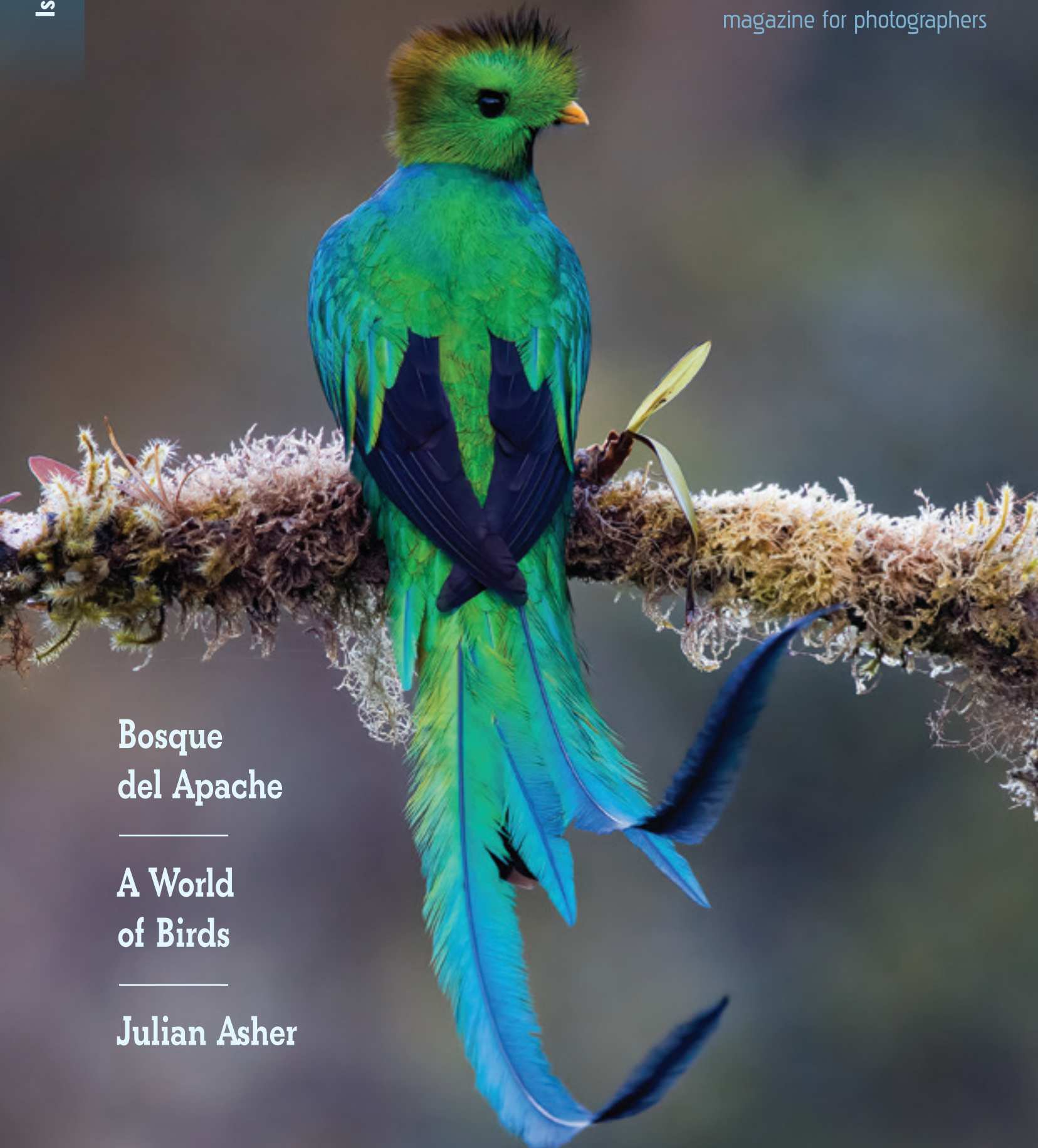


Issue 2 2022

The wild lens

magazine for photographers



**Bosque
del Apache**

**A World
of Birds**

Julian Asher

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PUMAS OF PATAGONIA PHOTO TOUR

See Chile's Mountain Lions November 3-10th, 2023

We have designed this tour to get you safely into positions to not only photograph wild pumas, but to have the luxury of spending hours with these cats, getting to watch their natural behavior.

By utilizing the best international and local puma guides and trackers we guarantee ourselves the best opportunities to find and follow the cats. Unlike other tours we also use off-road vehicles, meaning we can get to the cats quicker, without the physical strain on our participants.

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- Stay at a luxury hotel close to the pumas

"Pumas, pumas, pumas. Even having high preconceptions before the trip, I was absolutely blown away by the encounters we would have day after day with these cats. Sebastian and the local guide's wild cat knowledge is unparalleled and leads to a much greater appreciation for the cats and the trip in general. Best wildlife photography trip I have ever been on."

– Jeff Forlong

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The Wild Lens
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Publisher's Note



RANJAN RAMCHANDANI

"There is a singer everyone has heard, loud, a mid-wood bird, which makes the solid tree trunks sound again."

—Robert Frost

We are singing again! Able to go out and spread our wings to travel and experience the beautiful wildlife of our planet, at least for now.

The inspiring "World of Birds" feature offers a fabulous rainbow of colorful feathers and unique species taken by talented bird photographers from locales around the globe.

Witness the tremendous and prolific annual bird migration to Bosque del Apache, New Mexico, as large masses of feathered beauties travel in a harmonious, seemingly telepathic flock. Look for videos of this marvel on our website www.thewildlensmagazine.com, provided by our dynamic trio: Alissa Crandall, Kathy Doty and Cathy Hart. These photographers were on location from dawn until dusk to garner their intriguing photos.

Dr. Barnes teaches us camera trap and backlight techniques utilizing the wildlife of his backyard.

Photographer of the Quarter, Julian Asher, shares some gorgeous images from his award-winning portfolio.

We hope the beautiful peacock photo above inspires you to shake your tail feathers with your wildlife photography in the upcoming months. Good luck, and don't forget to share the images with us!

Michelle Liles
michelle@thewildlensmagazine.com



Bosque de

A large flock of birds is captured in flight against a clear, light blue sky. The birds are silhouetted against the sky, creating a sense of movement and activity. Below the sky, the landscape consists of numerous bare, dark trees with intricate branch structures, set against a warm, orange and pinkish sunset sky. The overall scene is serene and evocative, suggesting a natural, perhaps migratory, event.

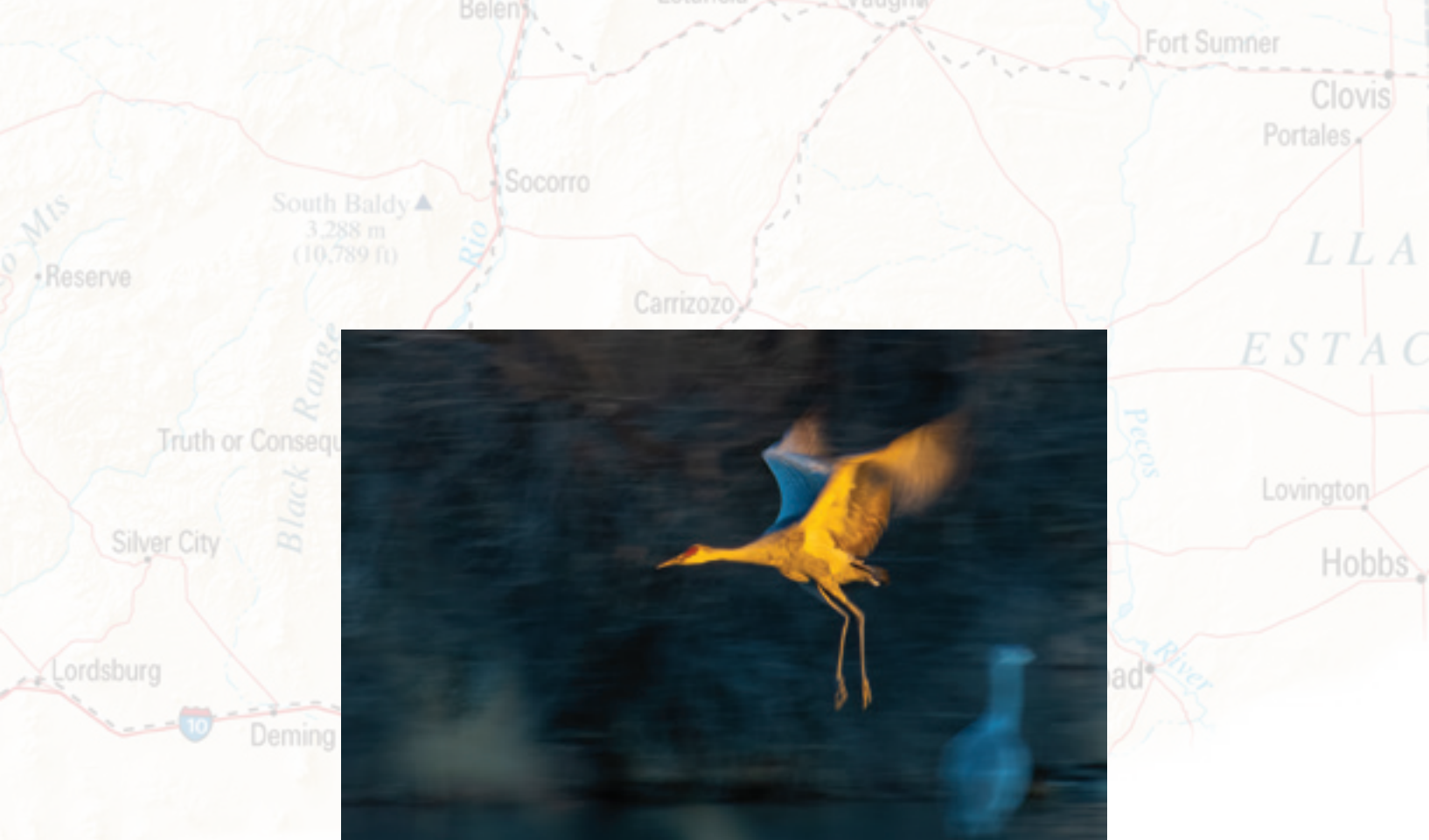
elApache

{A photojournal}

ALISSA CRANDALL

KATHY DOTY

CATHY HART



CATHY HART

You might have to pack your long underwear for a visit to the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge, where temperatures can drop below freezing in the winter, but any avid bird watcher would brave the chill to catch the show. People come to this 57,331 acre refuge near Socorro, New Mexico, to witness a massive gathering of sandhill and whooping cranes, snow geese, and a variety of ducks that overwinter or take shelter overnight in the Río Grande Valley while on migration. Other endemic bird species abound in the area as well, including various song birds and raptors. Native mammals include mule deer, bobcat, coyote and wild hog.

As the sun begins to rise, so do the birds, flapping off from their watery bedrooms and heading to nearby agricultural fields to fuel up before their eventual return to northern breeding grounds sometime around February.

Cathy Hart, Alissa Crandall and Kathy Doty spent a magical few days in the park in early 2022. Here are some of their beautiful images.



KATHY DOTY



CATHY HART

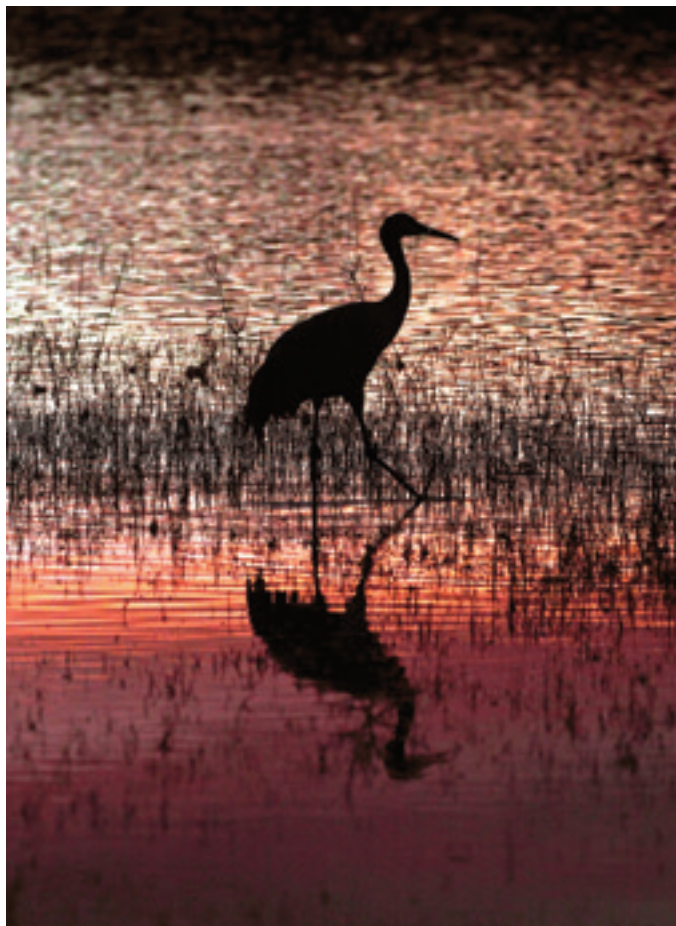


KATHY DOTY





CATHY HART



ALISSA CRANDALL

PANTANAL WETLANDS

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Jaguars of the Pantanal August 11-20, 2022



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S.S. SURESH | spotted owlet, India



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ROY TOFT | cock-of-the-rock, Peru





YURIKO DAVID | bald eagles, USA



MICHELLE LILES | blue footed booby, Ecuador



RANJAN RAMCHANDANI | bluebird, USA



ALISSA CRANDALL | cattle tyrant, Brazil



GRAEME GUY | golden bowerbird, Australia



GRAEME GUY | chestnut-headed bee-eaters, Malaysia



MARK SCHOCKEN | great horned owl, USA



ANNA GLENN | scarlet macaw, Costa Rica



RANJAN RAMCHANDANI | northern cardinal, USA



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w e l c o m e

NextGen

The future of photography, as represented in the efforts these young photographers from India, is in good hands. Air Force Bal Bharati School (AFBBS) in New Delhi recently held a visual arts contest for students and these are some of the results.

We applaud their learning and practice, not always with modern gear. Keep up the great work!

#AFBBSPHOTOGRAPHY



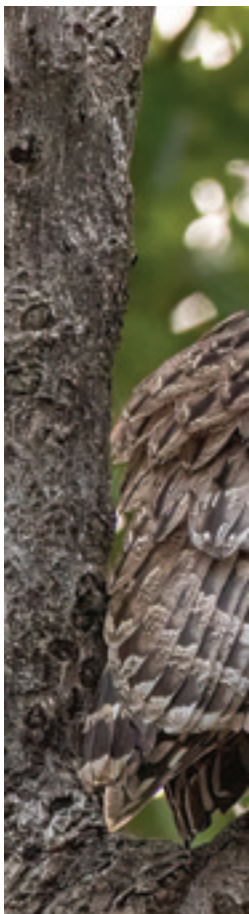
VAISHNAVI JAIN | *Homing pigeon*



ASHWIN SHRIVASTAV | *Rose ringed parakeets*



ASHWIN SHRIVASTAV | *Brown headed barbets*





PHOTOGRAPHER FEATURE

Julian Asher

www.pictusafrica.com | www.timelessafrica.com | [@pictusafrica](https://twitter.com/pictusafrica)



Julian Asher was born in San Francisco and grew up in the Bay Area. Currently based in London, he has lived in cities around the world including Zurich, Berlin and Cape Town. Julian is an award-winning photographer who will go to great lengths in the name of the perfect shot, including being duct-taped into a doorless helicopter over the Okavango Delta in Botswana.

The risks have paid off, though. His work has been featured at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in Washington, DC (Windland Smith Rice/Nature's Best Photography) and he is a multi-year finalist for the Natural History Museum's Wildlife Photographer of the Year in the UK. As a photographer, Julian focuses primarily on wildlife and wild places, with a particular interest in predators and their behaviour, and indigenous peoples and their traditions. He enjoys sharing his love of photography through leading photography workshops.

Outside photography, Julian is the founder of Timeless Africa, ranked as one of the world's top African specialist travel companies, a triple-bottom-line sustainable travel company focusing on bespoke itineraries to Southern, Central and East Africa, which has recently expanded to select destinations in Asia and Latin America. He serves on the boards of several Africa-focused NGOs with a focus on conservation and education. Julian is an adopted member of the Ju'hoansi San Bushman community at Xai Xai in Botswana.







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What Lurks At Night

*Pairing
Backlighting
Technique With a
Camera Trap*

Story and photos by Brent Barnes, MD

It seems like each year an increasing number of incredible photos are taken using camera traps. They are useful for potentially dangerous subjects like leopard, lion, tiger and other rare species that can be quite difficult to photograph at close range. However, the camera trap is not limited to rare animals and can be used to obtain images of common animals that live very close to us, often in our very own backyards. Due to their wariness of humans, nocturnal activity, or simply because they are thought to be so common, many photographers will not spend much time trying to photograph these animals. As tricky as camera traps can be to master, they allow a unique degree of control by the photographer through the placement of the camera and strobes in relation to the anticipated location of the subject. The result can produce stunning and unique photographs of fairly common subjects.

When some people think of camera trap photography, they think of grainy photos produced by low-quality cameras often used by hunters to find potential prey. However, multiple camera trap products will house a professional-level DSLR or mirrorless camera and take high quality photos today. After a couple of years of studying camera traps, I recently jumped into the world of camera trap photography. I purchased a system from Camtraptions which included an all-weather camera housing for my Nikon 500,

three portable strobes with a wireless system tied into a receiver on the camera, and an infrared motion sensor with a wireless system to trigger the camera to fire. I have yet to make a trip to Africa or Asia to try to capture photographs of exotic wild animals, but I have had a few weeks to photograph some of the “ordinary” wild animals in the backyard of my own suburban home. I do most of my backyard camera trap photography at night. So, after a few nights of standard photographs, I began to play with strobe placement to produce unique pictures of these common animals.

One of my favorite techniques is a backlit silhouette. The technique is relatively simple. I set up a small stack of logs as a stage to elevate the animal above ground level. The camera should then be placed in front of the logs (or stage). Because there are no focus lights and the photography is done at night, the camera should also be placed on manual focus. It's best to preset the focal length with an educated guess on where you think your animal will be in relation to the camera. The camera will not be able to autofocus in the dark and will require an extraordinarily long shutter speed to allow the autofocus system to function.

PHOTO: “Backlit Possum with Camera Trap”
1/200 secs f/18 AutoISO 1600



"Sidelit Raccoon", 1/200 secs f/13 Auto ISO 1600



"Backlit Possum", 1/200 secs f/18 Auto ISO 1600

I use a Nikon D500 with a Nikor 18-200 lens set at 18 mm for the widest view and preset the lens with a manual focus area approximately 60 inches in front of the lens. I generally use an aperture of f13-f20 to maximize my depth of field and use a shutter speed of about 1/125-1/250 secs. ISO is set on Auto ISO with a maximum setting of 1600 to minimize noise. I then set up the camera 60 inches away from my "stage". The motion sensor is set up near the target area. Finally, to produce a dramatic backlit image, I set up two strobes directly behind where I anticipate the animal will visit and put the strobes on manual mode with near maximum power. I elevate them off the ground so that they are directly behind the animal by placing them on a small bucket or tripod. If I want a slight amount of fill light on the front of the animal, I will put a single strobe on minimal power directly in front of the area where the animal will be. If I want more of a side light, I may increase the strobe power of my front strobe and move it to the side of my target area, most notably on the side I believe the subject's head will be facing. After testing the system to ensure all strobes are firing, I retire and go to bed and let my setup do the work.

On some nights, if there is a great deal of animal action, my backyard windows will light up intermittently like a lightning storm is going on. I warn my neighbors in advance and thus far have gotten no complaints. The

next morning, I pull my camera out and change batteries and run through the pictures to make any adjustments based on the results. So far, I have gotten backlit silhouette photographs of several common urban animals including possum, raccoon and skunk. I have found that the more fur or hair the animal has, the more dramatic the backlit silhouette technique can be.

The backlit silhouette photography technique is a reminder that unique photos can be taken of the everyday animals around us and, with a little bit of creativity, it will allow us to see them in a new (back) light!

ALL PHOTOS: Nikon D500 with Nikon 18-200 mm f3.5-5.6 lens at 18 mm on manual focus length



"Raccoon With Slight Front Fill", 1/250 secs f/13 Auto ISO 1600

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