

The Art of Wildflower Macrophotography

David Gubernick • July 26–28, 2019



\$275 per person / \$250 for Committee members
enrollment limited to 8 participants

Welcome to our field workshop on the art of photographing wildflowers of the Mono Basin. Through classroom instruction, demonstrations, and individual coaching in the field, you will learn to take creative and beautiful close-up images, further develop your artistic vision, and enhance your photographic skills in a warm and supportive learning environment.

Macrophotography takes us into a smaller world of more intimate detail. It entails moving in closer and magnifying the subject beyond our normal perception of it. This workshop emphasizes the artistry of macrophotography and the technical means to render such images. This is not a course in botanical identification.

David Gubernick, Ph.D., is an internationally and nationally published and award-winning nature photographer and workshop leader. Some of his exhibition prints can be seen at Gallery Sur in Carmel and the Ventana Inn & Spa in Big Sur. He provides fine art prints and stock images for the advertising, corporate, editorial, and home décor markets. His first photography book, *Wildflowers of Monterey County*, was published in 2002 and has been a bestseller, garnering rave reviews.

ITINERARY

Friday, July 26 at 6:00pm: Meet at the Lee Vining Community Center (296 Mattly Avenue) in Lee Vining. After registration and brief introductions, we will review participants' prior work. Because macrophotography requires slowing down and paying careful attention to detail, we will view a slide show to illustrate various artistic and technical details to consider when composing and capturing macro images. We will also go over camera functions and controls important for macro work and practice macrophotography in class, so please bring in your camera, tripod, and the lens you will be using. Discussion throughout the weekend is encouraged.

Saturday, July 27 at 9:00am: Meet for our day-long field session at the Lee Vining Community Center. We will carpool/caravan to our first location where David will demonstrate how he thinks about and composes a close-up shot and his thoughts regarding what to look for and what considerations are involved to obtain the best image possible. He'll also demonstrate the use of diffusers and reflectors, two of the most important tools for macrophotography. Participants will then begin to photograph flowers. David will help coach each participant individually with his/her photography throughout the day to help develop your personal artistic vision. After a lunch break, we will move to another location. Specific wildflower locations will depend upon what is blooming at the time. Some possible locations include Lundy Canyon, Lee Vining Creek, moraines at the foothills of the Sierra, and the shores of Mono

Lake. We will break for dinner around 5:00pm. We will convene again at 7:00pm back at the Community Center to review participants' images taken earlier in the day, and to continue our discussion.

Sunday, July 28 at 9:00am: This morning we will meet at the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore (51365 Highway 395) in Lee Vining. From the Mono Lake Committee we will carpool/caravan to another wildflower location. We will photograph throughout the morning and break for lunch in the field around noon. Our field session will end around 2:00 or 3:00pm. We will return to the Mono Lake Committee, review images taken earlier in the day, and show various options and equipment for capturing macro images. We will end by 5:00pm with final discussions, feedback, and farewells.

Altitude and Dehydration Cautions: This photography workshop will take place at elevations ranging from about 6,000 to 10,000 feet above sea level. It is a good idea to acclimate at the elevation of Lee Vining for at least 24 hours prior to the start of the workshop. Please bring lots of water and drink it often because your body loses more water at high altitudes. Please bring and use sunscreen, sunglasses, and a hat to protect yourself from the sun's intensity at high elevations.

TO BRING

- ___ digital SLR camera (no point-and-shoot digital cameras)
- ___ lenses, especially macro lens if you have one; moderate telephotos zoom may also be helpful
- ___ tripod without interconnecting spokes between legs allow the legs to spread out (see below)
- ___ tripod head: ball head; avoid heads with several handles (see below)
- ___ cable release, preferably with a built-in timer to reduce any vibration affecting the camera
- ___ diffuser (see below)—one of the most important tools for macro work
- ___ reflector (see below)—gold on one side, white or silver on the other
- ___ watch, stopwatch, or timer to time long exposures if no cable release with built-in timer
- ___ memory cards
- ___ fully charged camera batteries, extra batteries, battery charger
- ___ owner's manual for your camera
- ___ laptop with card reader and image editing software, preferably Lightroom 6/CC
- ___ flash drive to transfer images for review
- ___ warm clothing—dress in layers, be prepared for variable weather
- ___ sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, insect repellent
- ___ small notepad and pen for taking notes in field
- ___ plenty of water

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

If you do not have a diffuser, please purchase one. A diffuser is a piece of stretched white nylon on a collapsible hoop that is translucent, helps soften light on bright sunny days, and is an indispensable tool in macrophotography. A 32" diffuser should be available at most good photography equipment stores or on Amazon. Do not get a smaller size. You may also wish to purchase either a 22" or a 32" gold/silver (or white) reflector (solid gold on one side/solid silver or white on the other—**do not** get the *soft* gold reflectors) to help add a warm color and provide light into shadowed areas (this also is extremely useful if you will continue in macrophotography). **Do not get any 5-in-1 reflectors/diffusers.** You need to be able to use a reflector and a diffuser separately and at the same time, which 5-in-1s do not allow.

For macrophotography, a good tripod that allows you to get low to the ground is indispensable. Tripods that have interconnecting spokes between legs prevent the legs from being spread out and thus limit how close to the ground the camera can go. The center column can also limit how low to the ground your tripod can go.

Most wildflower macrophotography requires that you get down on the ground. Please wear comfortable clothes you do not mind getting dirty. You can bring a large plastic bag to lie on and/or a cloth or foam-pad knee rest to protect your knees (found in garden shops and garden sections).

It is especially important that you know the relationship between f-stops and shutter speeds. All participants should know how to operate their own camera. If you plan on purchasing a new camera before the workshop, please do so well in advance so that you will have ample opportunity to learn the various controls on your new camera. Please be sure you know whether your camera has a depth-of-field preview button or whether it has mirror lockup capability. You must know how to use these functions, and your camera manual should describe these. The workshop is open to all levels of photographers, but please come prepared.

MEALS

Bring picnic lunches both Saturday and Sunday to eat in the field. Saturday evening we will have a group dinner at one of the local restaurants—cost of dinner is not covered by tuition.

FEES

- **South Tufa fee:** the \$3-per-person entrance fee to South Tufa is good for a week; 80% of it stays at Mono Lake for improvements to interpretive/educational activities.
- **Old Marina fee:** the \$3-per-car-per-day fee enables Mono Lake's state park to stay open.

MACROPHOTOGRAPHY BOOKS

- Cremona, Julian. *Extreme Close-Up Photography and Focus Stacking*. Crowood Press, 2014.
- Gerlach, John & Barbara. *Close up Photography in Nature*. Focal Press, 2014.
- Gubernick, David J. *Wildflowers of Monterey County*. Carmel Publishing, 2002.
- Harnischmacher, Cyrill. *The Complete Guide to Macro and Close-Up Photography*. Rocky Nook, 2016.
- Sheppard, Rob. *Macro Photography: From Snapshots to Great Shots*. Peachpit Press, 2015.
- Sweet, Tony. *Fine Art Flower Photography*. Stackpole Books, 2012.

SIERRA WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION BOOKS

- Blackwell, Laird R. *Wildflowers of the Eastern Sierra & Adjoining Mojave Desert & Great Basin*. Lone Pine Publishing, 2002.
- Horn, Elizabeth L. *Sierra Nevada Wildflowers*. Mountain Press Publishing Co., 1998.
- Weeden, Norman F. *A Sierra Nevada Flora*. 4th edition. Wilderness Press, 1996.

If you have any questions about the specifics of the workshop, please contact David by email at davidgub1@earthlink.net. For any other questions, please contact the Mono Lake Committee.



Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars

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