



THE

# LAST FRAME

April 2007

St. Albert Photo Club's Monthly Newsletter



Left, a Black Crown Night Heron, right, photographer Dan Foley.

In the mid 1990s when I began to market my photographs of nature and wildlife, some of the most well-received images were photographed just east of Edmonton in the Beaver Hills region of Lamont County.

Right in the middle of this area, between the aspen parkland to the south and the boreal forests to the north, stands Elk Island National Park.

It is a region of glacial hills (called knobs) and ponds (called kettles).

Several years ago on a bitterly

cold December morning trip to Elk Island National Park, I met another photographer, Dan Foley.

Like myself, he was out there that morning to photograph snow-encrusted plains bison.

A conversation and an exchange of business cards back then, led to a recent invitation to Dan being the featured guest speaker at the St. Albert Photo Club meeting in April.

By profession, he is a machinist but during his down time he can be

found pursuing his passion, photographing ungulates (hoofed mammals).

His slide show of some of his favourite images supplemented with humorous anecdotes pertaining to how he created some of his favourite photographs inspired all of us.

### Shooting Preferences

Dan rarely goes to Elk Island National Park in the middle of summer, primarily to avoid the voracious hordes of mosquitoes.

He prefers photographing there

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| <p>MAY GUEST<br/><u>SPEAKER</u><br/>Neil Haggard</p> | <p>MAY<br/><u>COMPETITION</u><br/>Stairs</p> | <p>Click here to<br/>access our<br/>website</p> | <p>June<br/><u>COMPETITION</u><br/>Wind-up Dinner</p> | <p>JUNE<br/><u>GUEST SPEAKER</u><br/>None</p> |
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beginning late in the summer, which also coincides with the prime time for mammal photography.

Also, temperatures at this time of year can be cooler than in July and early August.

To photograph many of his mammal species in the Park, he utilizes “funnels”, passageways of about 100 yards wide that permit wildlife travel from one location to another.

When photographing wildlife, he recommended that you must stay as still as possible.

Compositionally, he chooses to shoot through thick cover, often utilizing foreground elements both as a frame and as an out-of-focus swatch of colour.

Exposures are often preset for his desired background before his wildlife subjects come into view, then bracketing his exposures (time permitting).

Hours of boredom are often mixed with seconds of pleasure while he is out conducting wildlife photography.

### Equipment

Dan is a true traditionalist, currently using only a camera body, a lens, and film to capture his photo-



Saw Whet owl chicks.

graphs.

His main lens is a manual focus Pentax 500mm f/4.5 telephoto lens, tripod mounted on a Manfrotto 055, eschewing most other accessories such as filters.

His staple film, Kodachrome 64, is often underexposed by up to one f/stop; this tends to increase its saturation.

His cameras are powered by nickel-cadmium non-rechargeable batteries, replaced every October/November.

### Mammals

Some of the ungulates that Dan finds in Elk Island include whitetail deer, elk,

moose, and bison.

Elk can lose up to 20% of their weight during the fall rut and drop their antlers in March or April.

Antler tines are more related to genetics than to age.

Moose are usually very difficult to photograph well, as they tend to stay in the brush and don't come out much.

Only in the winter months do they come out into the open (post rut), looking for food.

Wood Bison, on the south side of Highway 16 in Elk Island National Park, and Plains Bison on the north side, look best

when photographed in winter, caked in ice and snow.

In the 20 years that he has been photograph wildlife, Dan has only seen a fawn once, as it is very difficult to see fawns in nature.

Coyotes, porcupine, and owls can be found in the Park year-round.

Dan has also spent time photographing in Jasper National Park.

When photographing Bighorn Sheep, for example, he prefers images with mountain scenery in the background instead of green shrubbery.

The hill at the west end

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| <p>St. Albert Photo Club<br/>Vol:6 Issue:7<br/>PUBLISHED MONTHLY<br/>September - June</p> | <p><b>President</b><br/>Derald Lobay </p> | <p><b>Treasurer</b><br/>Allen Skoreyko </p> | <p><b>Web Master</b><br/>Tracey Guzak </p> | <p><b>Club Contact</b><br/>Doug Poon<br/>973-7035<br/>dougpoon@shaw.ca </p> |
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Bugling elk.

of Talbot Lake in Jasper National Park is always a great location for photographing Bighorn Sheep.

### Game Birds

Game birds, such as grouse and ptarmigan are especially good to photograph in either late fall or spring.

Dan suggests going to the south side of Wabamun Lake to capture images of game birds, especially Sharp-tail Grouse.

In the spring some game birds gather in leks, an ancestral gathering place for members of the grouse family.

Leks consist of a circle of about 20 birds. The males carry out dancing duels on “strutting” grounds for

nearby females and the less successful males are relegated to the outer part of the circle.

Females then move to the center of the lek where the dominant males mate with them.

Drumming logs, used by other species of game birds, can be determined by the presence of scat.

Most of the male game birds have wonderfully colourful feather patterns.

### Waterfowl

Dan also likes to photograph waterfowl (swans, geese, ducks, loons, grebes, etc.).

The region east of Edmonton is along a major flyway for many species of waterfowl.

Because of this, Dan finds himself drawn to this region in the springtime.

To photograph waterfowl, he constructs his own blind by weaving cattails through chicken wire.

Like game birds, males appear very colourful in their spring plumage.

### Conclusion

Recently Dan accepted a teaching position at NAIT.

The years of working long hours in the field are now behind him.

Later this year, he looks forward to trying out a digital camera. With some well-deserved extended time off in the summer months, and armed with

a new digital camera, he hopes to continue pursuing his passion of photographing wildlife.

Now, if only the mosquitoes will stay at bay!

Article-Derald Lobay  
and Erika Ewan

## Point Standings

### PRINTS

- 19 - Al Popil
- 13 - Sieg Koslowski
- 03 - Luc Guillemette
- 02 - Mark Williams
- 02 - Gary George
- 02 - Don Litven
- 01 - Derald Lobay

### SLIDES

- 24 - Derald Lobay
- 12 - Seig Koslowski
- 05 - Mufty Mathewson
- 01 - Gary George

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CLUB MEMBERS WINNING MONTHLY PICTURES



1st Place Print - Al Popil



2nd Place Print - Sieg Koslowski



3rd Place Print - Sieg Koslowski



1st Place Slide - Sieg Koslowski



2nd Place Slide - Derald Lobay



3rd Place Slide - Sieg Koslowski