

FOOTHILLS PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Monthly Newsletter

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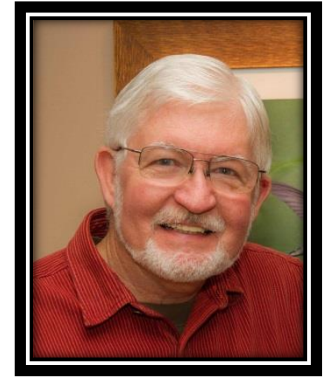


Photo Provided by FPG Member, Amelia Chatham

From Our President....

Greetings FPGers!

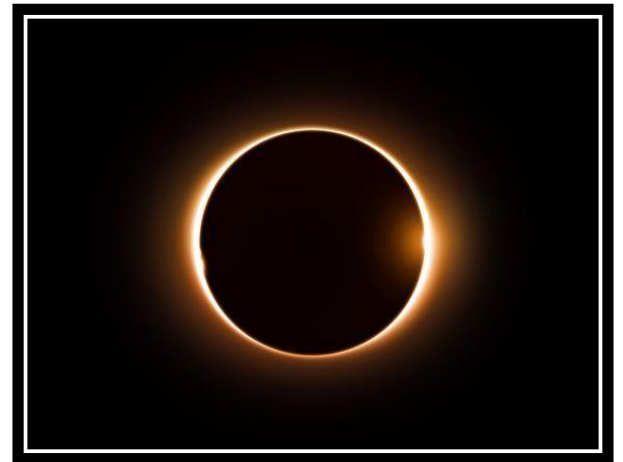
Our August meeting is on the 15th. The program will be presented by Shalabh Sharma from UGA. His subject will be on night photography and he will give tips for the eclipse which will be the next week. Get to know him by visiting his web page: www.shalabhphotography.com.



The critique theme for the August meeting will be **night photography**. Our program presenter will offer critiques of the images you submit. We won't use the Critique Bowl points system this month.

The field trip to the Gorge has been put on hold until the bugs in the elevator system brakes are exterminated! Stand by!

There is a lot of excitement building about the solar eclipse. People from Massachusetts reserved my vacation rental months ago, coming all this way to see the eclipse. I'm guessing the images people make will look something like this one I lifted off the internet. To me, it's a poignant reminder of how things in the heavenlies affect things on earth. If the earth's orbit was closer to the sun, we'd burn up. If it was farther away, we'd freeze. On the 21st, millions of people will be gazing into the sky, observing the same event, united in the same purpose. Now, how do we capture that with our camera?



I was reminded recently of the truth that in nature photography, timing is everything. I sat on my front porch for a couple of hours recently, trying to get good hummingbird images. I saw something moving in one of the bee balm plants the hummers were feeding on. It was an anole. I focused my camera and made a few shots. Three of the images captured the anole making a U-turn on the stalk, creating an almost perfect circle with his tail and body. I shared this image on Facebook and it received over 1500 likes. It made me think. My camera



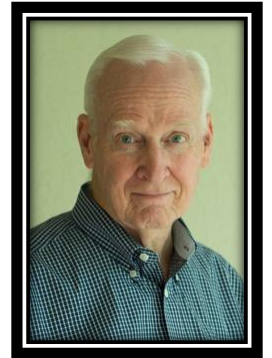
makes 10 images a second, so the 3 images took about 1/3 of one second. Out of all the images I made that day, that 1/3 of a second made all the difference. How quickly the “magic box” we hold in our hands can influence life. Think about it.

Happy Trails,

Danny

Forty-seven Popular Places to Photograph in Northeast Georgia

(Fifth in a series) *By John Martin*



First Presbyterian Church - Clarkesville



Description: This classic little church was built in 1848 by Jarvis Van Buren, cousin of President Martin Van Buren. Jarvis built the historic Grace Calvary Episcopal church - also in Clarkesville. In 1907 the church (which originally faced Jefferson Street) was jacked up and rotated to face Washington Street.

Notes for the photographer: I made this photo in late March - just in time to capture the flowering trees that flank the church. The chimney in the right background is on the much photographed (private residence) Charm House. There is another beautiful building on the church property to the left of the church (about where I was standing to make this photo).

Directions: From the square in Clarkesville head east along Washington Street. The church is on the left just before you get to the traffic signal. Park in the church's parking lot at the rear of the church.

GPS Coordinates: 34°36'43.5"N 83°31'19.5"W

Interesting fact: Clarkesville used to have a trolley that connected the town center to the Tallulah Falls Railroad station. The trolley tracts were installed in Washington Street about the same time that the church was jacked up and rotated to face Washington Street.

Backyard Birding

By Daniel Short

My favorite subjects to photograph are wild birds, their colors and behaviors are an endless source of beauty and entertainment. A Red Bellied Woodpecker couple are actually what renewed my interest in photography a couple of years ago. Sitting on my front porch, I began to notice the comings and goings of a pair of these beautiful birds. My goal became to get the perfect photograph of them, and over time I have several that I feel are good, not perfect, but good. It didn't take long for me to discover that one of the most important factors in good wildlife photography is your proximity to the subject; getting close. My limited mobility makes it paramount to bring the birds to me. Getting close takes planning and patience.

The solution I use is a birding studio in my yard. There are four key elements to take into consideration when setting up a birding studio: food and water, posing area, background, and concealment. What type of birds do you want to attract? Your selection of foods will determine what you attract. Basically suet for woodpeckers and other clinging birds, wild



bird seed for most species of perching and song birds, sunflower seeds for Goldfinches, and Meal Worms for Bluebirds. Sugar water in a ratio of 1 cup sugar to 2 cups of water for hummingbirds. All birds need water so some form of birdbath or water feature is also a good idea.

There are two basic options for the presentation of foods. Commercial poles and feeders are the simplest and provide a semi-permanent way to attract birds to your yard at all times. The second option is a natural perch with holes drilled in it to offer food as well as to pose the bird. My personal preference is the commercial feeders due to the amount of time and frequency required to setup and maintain these attractants. The second element is simply a perching area for your subjects to land and allow them to be presented in the most natural setting. Most people wouldn't want a photo of a bird on a commercial feeder. The easiest set-up is a medium sized tree branch placed in a hole adjacent to the feeders. Most birds will fly in and perch on a branch prior to proceeding to the feeders. The other option is the previously mentioned natural perch with holes for food. My personal set -up has evolved to a combination of the above mentioned items.

I have a 6-foot long landscape timber mounted on a 1 inch pipe, with commercial hangers for feeders, and a natural top section that can be changed to allow for a variety of natural perches. Mounting the timber on the pipe allows me to rotate the feeder for different



perspectives. You will see in the photo a woodpecker feeder made from a section of a small tree. It has holes in the back for suet and a hook for hanging. The black section on the bottom is a squirrel and raccoon guard made from a 24" section of 6" black stove pipe.

The third consideration is your background. I tried to place my perch to allow for an uncluttered background. Trees and bushes are a good selection. Try to avoid man-made items in your background. I also left a good deal of space behind the perch to allow for good bokeh.

The final consideration is what type of concealment you will use. When I set-up my studio for the first time I was severely limited in regards to my mobility. I was fortunate to have a large bay window in my home that allowed me to stay inside and still photograph the birds as they came and went. I still use this set-up today, clean windows are a must. This is somewhat limiting in that shooting through glass does degrade your images to an extent. Capturing superior images will require you be even closer to your subject with nothing between you and your subject but the lens. Personally I have used several different methods learned hunting earlier in my life. Camo clothing and netting are my favorite due to the weight and breathe-ability of these. I have also set-up a blind on my porch using camo netting suspended from hooks.

The last and most effective is a pop-up hunting blind. This allows for superior concealment and it's very easy to set-up and move if needed. The blind also allows you to get super close. The biggest drawback is that it can be very hot in the summer. The bushes around my porch and walk also make great concealment. Whatever you use, try to keep movement to a minimum.

Here are a few items you should add to your birding kit. A comfortable folding chair, the longer you stay and the less you fidget the better your opportunities for a great shot. A tripod or mono-pod, will help minimize camera movement, reducing fatigue and limiting camera shake. Having the camera in position to shoot when needed can't be overstated. Fluids and snacks, a cool drink or a lite snack makes it easier to stay longer. Last but not least, if you are going to be outside, insect repellent is a must.

One last piece of advice, the old hunting adage applies here too, "Arrive early and stay late." I hope this has been informative. Other good sources of information can be found on youtube. One of my favorites is by Tony Northrup: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wbmWt-FSHSs&t=413s>.

Hope you try it and good birding. I have a materials list and instructions available to club members for constructing a studio like the one I have. If you would like one at no charge contact me at: daniel_short@windstream.net.

Member Spotlight

Amelia Chatham



I was born and raised in Cornelia and lived there until I was 11, when we moved to Guntersville, AL. It is a beautiful peninsula on the Tennessee River. I graduated from Marshall County High School in 1961, and then attended Auburn University and graduated in 1967 with a BS in Art.

My Mom, Francis Ricketson Chatham, and Dad, Hubert Chatham, moved back to Cornelia when my dad retired from Chatham Transport. My mom was an artist and painted china and taught classes in Cornelia. My great grandmother owned the Loudermilk Boarding House which is still standing and is on the Historical Registry. I moved to Cornelia in 2003, to take care of my mom. I have a brother, Howard, who lives at the Orchard, so we all ended up back in Habersham County. I was married for 14 years and when I divorced, I had no children so I took my Chatham name back.



I worked as a commercial artist and really enjoyed my work, designing logo's, brochures, catalogs and working with photographers. My husband was an Industrial Designer and we moved around as this profession was in it's infancy. We lived in Alabama, Texas, Florida, South Carolina, Michigan and back to Georgia. I worked in a number of small advertising agencies until we moved to Atlanta and I took a job with a large corporation

where I worked for 24 years. We had a photography studio and photographer on site, so I worked a lot with him.



My first interest in photography started when our local photographer, Leon Kennamer, asked me to model for him when I was in high school in Guntersville. Leon was probably the most well-known “subtractive light” photographer of his day. I did more modeling after that and then started working with photographers in my jobs, from shooting buildings, rooms, clothes, people, etc. I started shooting my own photos on vacations and art shows, but did not really get into it much. After working with photos all day, you want to do something else! That is when I started collecting antique perfume bottles. I

did that for 20 years until I moved back to Cornelia and found there were no antique stores close by that worked well with my type collection.

I have had two knee replacements and I endure back problems, so my walking is limited. This has stopped me from doing a lot of things I would like to do.

When I decided I needed a hobby, photography was an easy choice. I bought a Nikon Coolpix and started taking photos of the flowers in the yard and realized I really liked the macro shots. Using the Coolpix was easy on the body and I was able to do a lot of things with it. Using the macro, I could see lots of colors and textures and the great designs on the flowers and bugs. I posted some on Facebook and a number of Italian Insect Photography groups asked me to join so I did, and it has been a lot of fun. They know me now and when someone new asks where the bug is from, one of the members will tell them I am in the US and they know I use a Coolpix. In 2014, John Martin asked me to join the Foothills Group and I accepted, but was not able to attend meetings until a year later. It has been a great experience and I have met so many nice people and learned so much.



My goal is to continue taking photos and hope people enjoy them. When someone likes or comments on a photo, I feel like I have accomplished what I set out to do and it is very satisfying. All my photos are taken with the Coolpix. I do have a lot of slides that I took with a Nikon and a Leica that I need to have converted. I'll start working on that as they are not flowers or bugs.

