

# Wildflower Macrophotography in the Mono Basin



**David Gubernick**  
**July 13-15, 2007**

**\$250 per person / \$225 for  
Mono Lake Committee members  
enrollment limited to 8 participants**

Welcome to our field workshop on photographing wildflowers of the Mono Basin and upper reaches of the Sierra high country. 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.

Film and digital media are welcome; there will be no slide film processing available during the workshop. If shooting film, please use slide film/transparencies because you will then be able to view the image as it was shot, rather than as a color- and exposure-adjusted processed print as obtained from color negative film. If you are shooting with a digital camera and have a laptop for reviewing work, please bring your laptop.

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 best-seller, garnering rave reviews. He is currently working on several other photography books, including one on the wildflowers of the Mono Basin.

## **ITINERARY**

On **Friday, July 13 at 7:00 pm**, meet at the **Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore** in Lee Vining. After registration and brief introductions, we will review participants' prior work (please bring 10–12 examples). A slide show will be given to illustrate the wonder and beauty of the wildflowers of the Mono Basin and to “whet your appetite.” Discussion throughout the weekend is encouraged.

On **Saturday, July 14**, our day-long field session will begin at **9:00 am at the Mono Lake Committee**. Our day-long field session will begin at 9 a.m. at the MLVC. Because macrophotography requires slowing down and paying careful attention to detail, we will use a slide show to illustrate various artistic and technical details to consider when composing and capturing your macro images before we go out into the field. We will car pool/caravan to our first location where David will demonstrate how he thinks about and composes a close-up shot and his thought process 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 you develop your own artistic vision. After a lunch break, we will move to another location or two. We will break for dinner around 5:30 pm. We will convene again at 7:00 pm at the Mono Lake Committee to review participants' prior work and images (digital) taken earlier in the day, and to continue our discussion. Specific wildflower locations will depend upon what is blooming at the time. Some possible locations include the Mt. Dana Trail, Tioga Tarns, Slate Creek/Saddlebag Lake, Bennettville trail, Warren Fork of Lee Vining Creek, Lundy Canyon, and shores of Mono Lake.

On **Sunday, July 15** we will meet at the **Committee at 9:00 am**. We will cover various options and equipment for capturing close-up (macro) images and then caravan to another wildflower location. We will continue to photograph throughout the morning and break for lunch in the field around 1:00 pm. Final discussions and farewells in the field, probably ending around 2:00 or 3:00 pm.

***Altitude and Dehydration Cautions:*** This photography workshop includes elevations ranging from about 6,500 to 10,000 feet above sea level. It is a good idea to acclimate at the elevation of Lee Vining for 24 hours before beginning the workshop. Participants with a history of heart, ear, or respiratory problems and those restricted to lower elevations should consult with their doctor. 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**

- 35-mm camera, film or digital (please no point-and-shoot digital cameras unless it has separate controls for f-stops and shutter speeds and can focus close up); medium format welcomed
- rolls of slide film (Velvia or Provia recommended) or compact flash cards
- lenses (macro lens if you have one—you do not need to buy one; telephoto lens)
- extension tubes, close-up diopters, teleconverters if you have any of these (you do not need to go out and buy them for this workshop, although getting an inexpensive +2 diopter for your telephoto lens would be worthwhile if you do not have macro capability)
- tripod and cable release (these are essential 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
- warm clothing—dress in layers, be prepared for variable weather
- sunscreen and hat, sunglasses, tick spray
- 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 helps soften the light on bright sunny days and is an indispensable tool in

macrophotography. A 12" LiteDisk (by Photoflex) costs about \$22 and should be available at most good photography equipment stores. You may also wish to purchase a 12" gold/silver reflector (solid gold on one side/solid silver on the other) to help add a warm color and provide light into shadow areas (this also is extremely useful if you will continue in macrophotography).

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 of drug stores).

There will be no slide film processing available during the workshop. If shooting film, please use slide film/transparencies because you will then be able to view the image as it was shot, rather than as a color- and exposure-adjusted processed print as obtained from color negative film. If you are shooting with a digital camera and have a laptop for reviewing work, please bring your laptop.

It is especially important that you know the relationship between f-stops and shutter speeds. We expect all participants to know how to operate their own 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.

## **MACROPHOTOGRAPHY BOOKS**

Shaw, John. *Closeups in Nature*. Amphoto, 1987. Although not updated, still one of the best for learning macrophotography.

Sweet, Tony. *Fine Art Flower Photography*. Stackpole Books, 2005. Lovely images with emphasis on artistic techniques; clearly explained and illustrated.

Gubernick, David J. *Wildflowers of Monterey County*. Carmel Publishing, 2002. One of the best macrophotography books of wildflowers with descriptions and comments by expert botanist Vern Yadon.

## **SIERRA WILDFLOWER IDENTIFICATION BOOKS**

Weeden, Norman F. *A Sierra Nevada Flora*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Wilderness Press, 1996. Field guide, identification key and descriptions of plants; illustrations; no photos.

Blackwell, Laird R. *Wildflowers of the Eastern Sierra & Adjoining Mojave Desert & Great Basin*. Lone Pine Publishing, 2002. Photos and brief descriptions.

Horn, Elizabeth L. *Sierra Nevada Wildflowers*. Mountain Press Publishing Co., 1998. Photos and brief descriptions.

If you have any questions about the specifics of the workshop, please contact David by email at [david@rainbowspirit.com](mailto:david@rainbowspirit.com). For any other questions, please contact the Mono Lake Committee at (760) 647-6595.



## **Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars**

P.O. Box 29 • Lee Vining, CA 93541 • (760) 647-6595 • [www.monolake.org](http://www.monolake.org)