

Mono Basin Fall Photography



Lundy Canyon in autumn by Robb Hirsch

October 8–10, 2025 • Robb Hirsch

\$380 per person / \$360 for Mono Lake Committee members
enrollment limited to 10 participants

Mono Lake and the surrounding basin are magnets for nature photographers. Professionals and amateurs alike are drawn to the unique, otherworldly landscapes, striking canyons, and the dynamic light often present. The abundant opportunities provide the perfect outdoor classroom to learn the fine art of landscape photography. Join professional photographer Robb Hirsch as he teaches participants the process of creating the strongest possible images. Everybody has an individual perspective for appealing scenes to photograph; participants in this workshop will learn how to refine their own vision and best interpret it through the camera.

Topics to be covered include creating strong compositions, evaluating proper exposure, utilizing depth-of-field for maximum impact, pre-visualizing images, reading light to increase productivity, and how to visually isolate a subject for more appealing images. Robb will teach the visual and technical workflow process to create compelling images. There will be a high level of personal interaction as the group size is limited and Robb dedicates all his attention to the participants.

This workshop is open to all levels of photographers. A digital or film SLR (rather than a point-and-shoot camera) is highly recommended as they offer greater creative latitude and are more productive to teach with but not required. A tripod is also highly recommended as it greatly helps with teaching and learning composition. It is expected that participants have a basic working knowledge of their cameras.

Robb Hirsch is a biologist/naturalist turned professional photographer based in Groveland, California, just outside Yosemite. His images have appeared in numerous publications, including Nature's Best, Sierra Club, and Mono Lake Committee calendars, and several textbooks. He maintains his gallery, Mountain Sage, in Groveland and has been invited to several other gallery showings of his work. His photography can also be seen at robbhirschphoto.com. Robb's images are known for their compelling compositions, attention to detail and fine light. As a past naturalist and educator, Robb brings a positive and engaging teaching style to his workshops.

ITINERARY

Wednesday, October 8, 2:30pm: We will meet at the Mono Lake Committee Information Center & Bookstore in Lee Vining (51365 Highway 395) for brief introductions and an outline for the weekend. Robb will give a slide presentation demonstrating concepts and techniques for the workshop. We will then carpool to our afternoon/sunset photography location. We will break for dinner after the sunset shoot around 7:00pm.

Thursday, October 9, 6:00am: We will meet at the Mono Lake Committee and head to our sunrise destination. We will shoot through the late morning with a break for breakfast. Depending on conditions, we may visit several locations in the morning. The group will reconvene at the Mono Lake Committee in the early afternoon and head out to shoot through sunset. Dinner will be after we finish shooting around 7:00pm.

Friday, October 10, 6:00am: We will again meet pre-dawn to photograph sunrise and shoot until around midday with a break for breakfast. We will meet back at the Mono Lake Committee in the early afternoon to continue discussions until mid-afternoon when the workshop ends.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: DIFFICULT

This seminar's activity level: *difficult*. We will be walking up to three miles a day, some of which will be over uneven terrain, off trail, and will include stepping up and over obstacles. This type of walking requires good balance, some agility, and stamina. Be prepared for short, steep sections of trail. This seminar includes a short but challenging hike at altitude.

WEATHER & ALTITUDE

Temperatures in fall can be comfortable or downright chilly, with possible windy and snowy conditions. Average temperatures in October in Lee Vining are 66°F (max) and 36°F (min).

This seminar will take place at elevations ranging from about 6,500 to 8,500 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 seminar. Those with a history of heart, ear, or respiratory problems should consult their doctors before attending. Anyone restricted to lower elevations should not enroll.

Remember to bring (and drink!) lots of water because your body loses more water at the higher altitudes of the Mono Basin. Begin drinking extra water as you drive to higher elevation in order to prevent dehydration and headaches. Also, the sun is intense at high elevations, capable of burning even on cool and cloudy days, so be sure to protect yourself thoroughly using sunscreen, sunglasses, and hat.

MEALS

Meals are not included in the tuition. Participants are encouraged to take meals together to further the collaborative process. Due to the timing of sunrise and sunset, we will eat breakfast after or during our morning shoot and dinner after our sunset sessions, so be sure to bring plenty of snacks to eat in the field (and drinking water too).

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.

TO BRING

- ___ digital or film camera (SLR recommended)
- ___ lenses
- ___ film or memory cards
- ___ batteries and charger
- ___ tripod (highly recommended)
- ___ other camera accessories (cable release, lens cleaner, etc.)
- ___ sun hat
- ___ sunscreen
- ___ comfortable walking shoes/boots
- ___ layered clothing and warm clothing
- ___ gloves or hand warmers
- ___ water/snacks

For any questions regarding the workshop, please contact the Mono Lake Committee at fieldseminars@monolake.org or Robb at robbhirschphoto@gmail.com.



Mono Lake Committee Field Seminars

P.O. Box 29 • Lee Vining, CA 93541 • (760) 647-6595 • monolake.org/seminars