

June 2023 Newsletter

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Photo by
Meike Cryan

APC ACTIVITIES

Next Meeting

June 19, 2023 7:00pm First Baptist Church

Programs

July 17, 2023 Bob Finley (Critiquing Guide to what makes a good photograph)
 Sep. 18, 2023 Cassia Rivera (Right of Passage)
 Nov. 20, 2023 Ciara Wilder Massingale (Wilder Uwharrie Photography)

Exhibits

Apr. 7 - July 21 Center for Creative Leadership
 September Burlington Artist League

2023 PhotoShows

June 19, 2023 Macro/'Up Close'
 Aug. 21, 2023 Action
 Oct. 16, 2023 People at Work

Field Trips

Q2 2023 Burl. Arboretum/City Park
 Q3 2023 Duke Homestead
 Q4 2023 TBD

President's Comments—June 2023

By Keith O'Leary

Thanks to David Hall for his interesting presentation on Street Photography last month. As our exhibit at CCL in Greensboro continues through July 21st, I continue to hear of more pictures being sold. Here is a short list of 7 photography exhibit tips and tricks from Laura Gibson, the Art Curator at CCL, plus some I found online:

1. Order canvas prints with the wrap option if possible. Avoid edge stripes.
2. Floating frames work well.
3. Inspect prints for any damage or irregularities upon receipt and communicate back to the printer promptly when found for possible reprinting at no charge.
4. Make titles interesting but run by others before finalizing to be sure they 'get it'.
5. Hangers should be placed on both sides approx. 1/3 down from the top. Wires should fall below the top of frame or photo when taut.
6. Framing per photo size is preferred but if matting, the frame size for the most visually appealing results is 1.618 times the size of the photo. Ex. For 11" x 14" artwork, multiply the length and width by 1.618 for a frame size of 17.8" x 22.7". An option for matting when the mat is just above and below the photo (fits photo on sides) is to position the photo at the top of the frame and use the blank mat below the picture to print your photo title and/or photography business name and/or sign it with a sharpie.
7. Consider pricing by square inch (per medium) to consistently price your work.

Please join us at our June meeting where Dean White will be presiding over our next PhotoShow of your 'Macro/Close Up' photos. Thanks for your participation in making this a great club. Happy shooting!

Keith

APC BOARD

President	Keith O'Leary	Exhibit Chair	Angela Bostek
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PhotoShow Chair	Dick Schenck	Editor	Ray Munns

June 19th PhotoShow – “Macro/Up Close”

Dick Schenck, PhotoShow Chair

We encourage ALL members to submit photographs for our bi-monthly Photo Show and would like to see EVERYONE represented!

We try not to exceed 50 photos per show. Therefore, we ask that you submit a maximum of three (3) photos. We may only use one or two of your photos based on the number of entries so PLEASE indicate your preferred photo in the file name of each photo (01, 02 or 03; see naming information below). If you have any issues with formatting or submitting, please let us know at apcphotoshow@gmail.com and we will be happy to assist. Also let us know if your submitted photo is not acknowledged within a few days and/or by the deadline.

Submission Details

Number of Entries:

Max of three (3) entries per member. Please indicate your preferred photo with number 01, 02, or 03.

Size:

No larger than 25 MB.

Preferred minimum size is 1024 x 768.

Format:

.jpg

File Naming:

Please rename your photo submissions using the following format:

Firstname.lastname_01, _02 or _03 (*per use preference*)

Example: john.doe_01.jpg john.doe_02.jpg john.doe_03.jpg

Email:

Email Address: Send all images to apcphotoshow@gmail.com

Email Subject Line: Include the month of the PhotoShow and your name.

Example: Photos for June Photoshow – John Doe

Entry Deadline:

5:30 PM on Monday, June 12, 2023.

Please Note:

Submissions that do not adhere to the guidelines above may be returned.

Don't forget: Photos may be submitted early for the following show!

APC Trading Post

Submit brief descriptions of photography items you would like to sell, swap or purchase to Ray Munns (raymunns@bellsouth.net) no later than the 20th of each month. Please include your name, contact info (phone and/or email) and if each item is for sale or something you are looking to purchase. Also notify Ray when items should be removed from the newsletter.

For Sale

Manfrotto tripod and ball head with quick release. This combination cost over \$200 new. A used one on eBay starts at \$135. I will consider any reasonable offer.

Contact Dick Schenck 919-968-8757

For Sale

8" LED Ring Light with 3 light modes and variable brightness control. Includes large velvet drawstring pouch, tripod stand, clamp-on base, mobile phone holder and remote control. Charges via USB.

Contact Keith O'Leary @ 336.693.8268 or videoman@triad.rr.com.

For Sale

Nikon D5000 Camera with 2 batteries \$300

Contact Mio Winkle 787-587-5989

Free

Two Canon lenses, a 100 mm macro lens, and a 70-300 mm macro lens that are both are in excellent condition.

Contact Leonard Barnard 336-270-3194



WEBMASTER NOTES

Check out our website @ <https://www.alamancephoto.com/> for:

Updated [Members' Galleries](#)

[First Quarter Field Trip photos of Duke Chapel](#)

List of [Events](#) for the year including speakers and judges

Information on the [CCL exhibit](#) being held now through July 21st



Alamance Photography Club is also on [facebook](#)

NEW! We now have a **Private Facebook Group** (*only for members via invitation*). This is a place you can share your photos with others in the club. If you are part of facebook and would like to join this private group please email me at alamancephoto@gmail.com

Christie O'Leary

Webmaster



Table Talkers



Join us for lunch on **Thursday, June 15th**
Southbound Sandwich Works, Correct Time Plaza
3328 S. Church St. in Burlington at 12:00 noon!

No agenda, no program, no music, just friendly conversation with fellow photographers. Spouses of members are always welcome.

Come in, order and join us in the side room.

Looking forward to seeing you June 15 at noon!



Mark Austin

Q2 Field Trip: Burlington Arboretum/City Park

The group field trip took place on Saturday, April 29 at the Burlington Arboretum (408 E. Willowbrook Drive) and The Burlington City Park and Amusement Area (located nearby off South Church Street). A number of us enjoyed lunch and conversation at The Park Restaurant adjacent to City Park. Weather was cloudy in the morning, but sunny in the afternoon, giving the opportunity for whatever photographic conditions were preferred. **If you were unable to participate with the group, you can still take and submit photos of the field trip locations until June 30. To submit photos, please follow the instructions emailed to all club members on May 13 and use the link in that email. *If you have any questions, contact Hugh Comfort (comfortrh@gmail.com).***

Hugh

Membership Corner

Ken Sellers

Now is a good time to invite friends and acquaintances who are interested in photography to be a guest at the next meeting on Monday, June 19th. Anyone can attend up to 2 meetings as a guest before joining. Beginning July 1, anyone who joins for the remainder of 2023 will pay only 50% of the regular annual membership or \$20. This is a great way to see what opportunities the Alamance Photography Club offers.

Ken Sellers

Membership Chair



HUMMINGBIRD PHOTOGRAPHY STEP BY STEP

By APC Member - Edward Haynes

In April I saw my first hummingbird of the season, in Greensboro, NC. It's time to get those feeders up and ready for the season. The males always show up first and offer some good photos before the females complete their migration.

While spending the last two years trapped at home in Covid lockdown, I decided to work at perfecting a system to photograph hummingbirds in my backyard. I have a system now that works, and I want to share that process. The steps and equipment I will explain are very general and will work with about any equipment you own. Maybe you can experiment using my ideas and your equipment to develop a system that works for you.



I use flashes to stop the wing motion during my photography. Some people like to show the wings in motion, but I prefer to stop the motion and not have the wings blur. My system requires the use of a background, and my favorite background is an out of focus photo of my front yard grass during the hot summer drought of last year. I printed this photo on my 13 by 19 printer, but you could just take it to Office Depot and have them print it for you using matte paper.

HUMMINGBIRD PHOTOGRAPHY—STEP BY STEP . . . Continued

I use the Olympus OM-1 Mirrorless Digital Camera with a 100-400mm lens most of the time. The flashes are Godox VING V860II, TTL Li-Ion Flash Kits, and the Godox XProS TTL Wireless Flash Trigger to match your camera. This flash has a large rechargeable lithium battery which allows you to shoot very fast. I shoot at 8 frames per second.

As you can see from the setup photo, I use four flashes. One flash is on the background, one flash points to the bird's throat, and two flashes are above the bird. Each flash is about 15 inches from the bird and flower. Believe it or not, the birds do not care! I place my setup near where the feeder would normally hang. The feeder is removed during the photo session, and I place the setup flowers near that location. The hummingbird food is placed inside the flower using a needle (5 Pack 5ML/CC Premium Ink Filling Syringe with plastic blunt needle tip for fountain pen from Amazon). The hummingbirds love the Pennington, Ready to Use, Electro Nectar Clear Hummingbird Food, 80 oz. bottle from Walmart.



My normal camera setup is f16 or f22, ISO 200, and a shutter speed of 250. The 250 is the sync speed of my camera. Your sync speed may be different. Since I am shooting against a background, I use f16 to get the entire bird and flower in focus. The flash speed is set at 1/16 to stop the wing motion. The flash is set at 8 frames per second in my camera, which will allow the flashes to recharge between shots.

HUMMINGBIRD PHOTOGRAPHY—STEP BY STEP . . . Continued

My editing is done in Lightroom and Photoshop by adjusting exposures, contrast, color, and color temperature (all the normal edits). There is one trick I use in Photoshop that I love, and it makes a world of difference to my photos. After all my normal edits are done, I use a new feature in Photoshop called Sky Replacement to add textured backgrounds to some of my photos. Go to

Edit-Sky replacement and click on the small PLUS at the bottom to add your own textures. You can make or buy textures. I like to buy my textures from <https://www.dailytexture.com/> and make sure you use the coupons that are located on her website to save money!



One question I get a lot is “Where do I focus”? One way to focus is to use manual focusing or back button focusing and focus on the flower that the bird is going to feed from and then recompose so you have both the bird and the flower in your composition. The other way is to use the single spot autofocus system on your camera, the touch screen, and try to touch the screen to get a great composition that includes the bird and the flower. In either case, you will need to practice until you get it right.



I normally buy my flowers from the local farmer's market when in season. The season is very short and sometimes I buy flowers from Lowes Foods. I bought a group of 4 stems of Peruvian Lilies from Lowes Foods for four dollars. The hummingbirds love the red flowers more than any other color.



6 Tips for Conveying Character and Personality in Wildlife Photography

By Will Nicholls

Are your wildlife photos feeling a little bit uninspired? Animal subjects are often fascinating to observe and photograph, but if you want to create compelling wildlife images, it's important to go beyond technical mastery and produce images that convey both the character and personality of the subject.

You might be a bit skeptical here, but most animals do have personalities. I am doubtful this applies to certain creatures (e.g., ants), but mammals in particular have traits and habits. Some may be bold and investigate new things, whereas others may retreat and shy away from disturbances. I encourage you to view this as the animal's personality and use your wildlife photography skills to capture it on camera!

It's definitely not easy to get this right, though. A still photo freezes a single moment in time, which means you need to work hard if you want to translate an animal's personality into a single shot. In this article, I share six tips to help you out – and I also offer plenty of examples so you can see what I mean.

Ready to start creating animal photos with character? Let's dive right in, starting with my first tip.

1. Show unique behaviors



As a zoologist, I am fascinated by animal behavior. Some of these behaviors seem predictable – foraging and hunting, for instance – whereas others can shock and surprise us. (Did you know that fish swallow small stones to aid digestion?)

It's often by capturing these interesting behaviors that you can convey the essence of a particular species. If you can photograph a bird, a bear, or a monkey behaving as they do in nature, the resulting images can give the viewer a real sense of that animal's personality.

6 Tips for Conveying Character and Personality in Wildlife Photography . . . Continued

But how do you capture these behaviors on camera? When you're staring through the viewfinder, it's easy to get tunnel vision and focus purely on creating a technically perfect shot of your wildlife subject. If you take a step back and study the animal, however, you may start to notice behavior patterns that you can photograph.

It also pays to read up about your target species ahead of time. If you know you'll be photographing a certain type of fox, for example, see if you can find research online that discusses any unusual behaviors. You might also look for videos that show the fox in its natural habitat; these can help you get a sense of its behavior before ever encountering it.

Then, when you're in the field, try to remain as alert and observant as possible. Many animals have giveaway moves that warn you of an impending display – such as great skuas, a seabird found in the Northern Hemisphere, which I photographed while stretching.

In this particular case, the skua was preening its feathers continuously. Birds often do this before flapping their wings or displaying, so I waited patiently for 15 minutes while the bird preened, knowing that I would probably be rewarded with a display afterward (and as you can see, I was!).



Confrontations between two animals are also commonplace and certainly worth photographing. If you see animals approaching one another (even if they're two different species), chances are that you'll see some sort of interaction.

Take the white-tailed eagles in this image, for example. I was pretty sure they'd both have a disagreement over the tasty fish

lying on the ice. I made sure to nail the focus in advance, then I kept the shutter half-pressed and fired as soon as they lifted their wings.

6 Tips for Conveying Character and Personality in Wildlife Photography . . . Continued

2. Capture humorous moments

While animals don't try to be funny, they often do things that make us chuckle – and if you can capture the moment, the resulting images are often full of personality.

Unfortunately, these photos often can't be predicted in advance. Instead, you need to know your camera well and remain poised and ready at all times.

When I lead workshops, one of the main things I try to get my clients to realize is that as soon as you drop your camera down, you're risking missing the shot. If your subject is in front of you, then you've already done the hard part (waiting for an appearance), so make sure you keep your eye on the viewfinder and remain at the ready, almost like a sniper training an eye on a target.



This image, which features a scratching red squirrel, was only available for a moment. The squirrel lifted its leg, and I was able to fire my camera because I was already following its progress along the branch through the viewfinder.

Before capturing this shot, I had been hoping to capture a stag peering through the trees. Then, when he stuck his tongue out, I couldn't help but click away! I didn't plan for it to happen, but it's these little moments that bring a smile to the viewer and bring personality and character to your wildlife photos.



6 Tips for Conveying Character and Personality in Wildlife Photography . . . Continued

3. Fill the frame

Not all great wildlife photography features frame-filling compositions, but it's a very effective way to bring the focus solely to the animal while also magnifying little details that add extra personality to the shot. If you look back at the photos displayed above, you'll see that they all use the frame-filling technique, and it's certainly an approach I encourage you to try.

Of course, as any wildlife photographer will know, filling the frame isn't so easy. You need a long lens, and you also need to develop some stalking skills so you can get close without scaring the animals off. If you're able to be patient and move toward your subjects slowly, it can make a huge difference!

It can also be helpful to create plenty of background bokeh (i.e., blur), which will isolate the subject and prevent the background from distracting the viewer. A long lens will increase the quality and intensity of the blur, but you'll also need to use a wider aperture to really enhance the effect.



Ultimately, when the attention of the viewer is focused on the animal alone and there are zero distracting background elements tearing the eye away, there will be a deeper connection between the viewer and the animal. It perhaps sounds a little clichéd, but it really is true! In the above image of a squirrel, you can see that the eye contact – along with a catchlight in the eyes – really makes the shot pop, yet it's the tighter composition and background blur that keeps your attention focused on the squirrel.

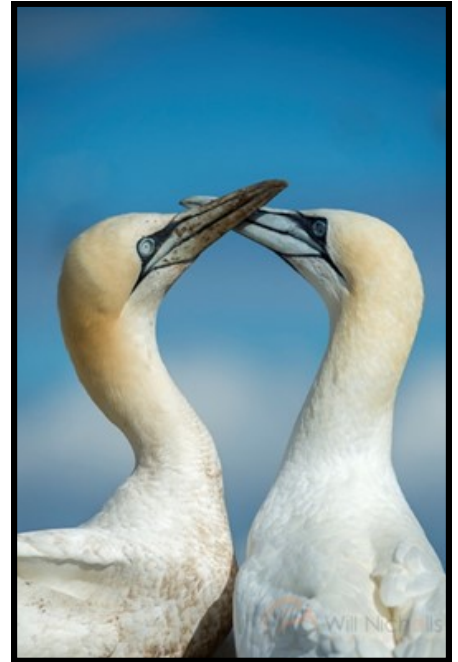
Pro tip: When doing tight compositions like this, be careful not to chop limbs off halfway. Either include the entire limb or crop it away entirely!

6 Tips for Conveying Character and Personality in Wildlife Photography . . . Continued

4. Show family ties

If there's anything humans can relate to, it's the bond that animal parents have with their offspring. Not all animals care for their young, but those that do can be seen caring and working endlessly to raise their children.

For example, look at how these two gannets reaffirm their bond each time the other returns to the nest after gathering fish.



If you can capture familial interactions like these, your photos will look interesting, unique, and heartwarming all at once. And if you can photograph parents feeding their young, even better.

It doesn't have to be a feeding behavior, though! Playful shots that depict a wildlife family will also give your shots the awe factor. Obviously, you have to be

in the right place at the right time, and these kinds of shots do require a lot of dedication and time to achieve, but they're often worth the effort!

6 Tips for Conveying Character and Personality in Wildlife Photography . . . Continued

5. Try something different

As a photographer, how many times have you been told that you can improve your shots through experimentation? Yes, it's oft-repeated advice, but it really, truly works, and I encourage you to get experimental and creative when approaching your wildlife photography.

You might try capturing wildlife with an all-black background, or you might use a remote control to capture close-ups using a wide-angle lens. You could use a slow shutter speed and a panning technique to convey motion, or you could shoot from an unusually low or high angle for a new perspective.

I myself am a fan of the high-key style of wildlife photography, where you isolate the subject against the background by blowing out the highlights in an image.

The mountain hare displayed here was grooming its fur, but when it bowed its head, it looked rather solemn. The white background makes the shot look painterly, and I personally think it's a rather intimate portrait.

Be prepared to step outside your comfort zone. That's how you'll get the photos that set you apart from the endless bird-on-a-stick shots we see day after day. Things may go wrong at first, but that's okay! Really challenge yourself to photograph creatively, and see what you can come up with.

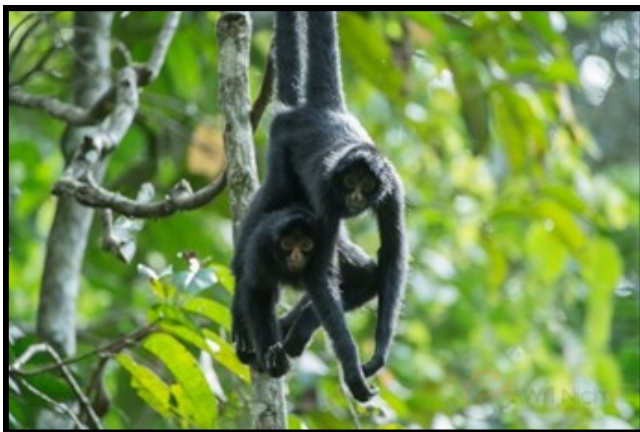


6. Use light unconventionally

Light makes or breaks pretty much any form of photography, and wildlife photography is no exception. Most wildlife shooters like to use golden-hour front light (a common tip is to "point your shadow at the subject"), but while this can be effective, you can produce especially interesting shots by going against the grain.

6 Tips for Conveying Character and Personality in Wildlife Photography . . . Continued

Backlighting is particularly effective for conveying mystery and magic in an image. I used this to my advantage when photographing Peruvian spider monkeys, a primate that is unfortunately on the endangered list. The monkeys would have looked fine when front lit, but the backlight breaking through the rainforest canopy created a magical result.



You might also play with shade-sun combinations, where your subject is covered in shade but the background is lit by the sun. And test out some side lighting, too, which can give your images a wonderful sense of three-dimensionality.

One final tip: If you do use light in an unconventional way, be careful about your exposure. Backlight, for instance, can cause you to blow out the highlights around the animal, which is a big problem – so make sure you select your camera settings carefully. When it works, though, it really works!

Creating wildlife photos with character and personality: final words

Well, there you have it:

Six tips to capture plenty of character and personality in your wildlife shots. Hopefully, you now feel inspired to head out with your camera and create some unique images.

At the end of the day, I'd really just recommend that you keep clicking the shutter each time something of interest happens. Don't wait and try to save space on your memory card. Otherwise, you might just miss something amazing!

How to Use Bulb Mode for Long Exposure Photography

By Simon Ringsmuth

Most DSLR and mirrorless cameras have a feature called Bulb Mode. If you're like me, you probably saw that in one of the menus or buttons when you first got your camera and have promptly ignored it ever since. Even the name sounds weird, and at first glance, you might think it has more to do with gardening than photography. But it's actually a very useful option that can unlock all sorts of creative possibilities with your camera.

Learning to use Bulb Mode does take a bit of practice though, and it helps to understand how it got its strange name in the first place. But I think you'll find that the payoff is worth your time.



Lightning shot using Bulb Mode

History Lesson

Way back in the early days of photography, long before digital image sensors existed and autofocus lenses were little more than science fiction, the act of taking a picture still worked in many ways like it does today. Hidden inside the sealed innards of a camera was a piece of light-sensitive film onto which an image would be projected when the camera's shutter was opened, thus letting light pass through the lens and onto the film.

How to Use Bulb Mode for Long Exposure Photography . . . Continued

It's the same principle that DSLRs use today. The only major change is how the shutter is constructed and the manner in which the timing is controlled. A hundred years ago there was no such thing as computer-powered cameras or precise mechanical actuators that could open the shutter for a long period of time (typically longer than one second). Instead, the photographer held a small bulb in his or her hand which was attached to the camera's shutter by a piece of tubing.

Squeezing the bulb opened the camera shutter and releasing the bulb closed it, which meant the timing of the shutter was entirely up to the individual taking the photo. As long as the bulb was squeezed, the shutter would stay open. This method continued to be used on cameras for years to come, and it's even possible to find bulb-style shutter releases for cameras today.

In short, think of Bulb Mode as Time Travel Mode. It basically makes your camera function like a camera from 100 years ago, when you had to squeeze a bulb to open the shutter, and then release the bulb to close it. The only major difference is that unless you literally have a bulb-style shutter release like the one pictured below, you will press the shutter button to open the shutter and release your finger to close it. Pretty neat, isn't it?



Squeeze the bulb to open the shutter on this Pentax 35mm film camera. Release the bulb to close the shutter. Image courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

How to Use Bulb Mode for Long Exposure Photography . . . Continued

Bulb Mode Today

Most modern cameras allow you to set the shutter speed anywhere from 1/4000th of a second and 30 seconds, which gives you an incredible range of creative photographic possibilities. These shutter speeds work in tandem with a camera's light meter, as well as the ISO and lens aperture, to help you get properly-exposed images with little to no fuss or hassle. With that in mind, the idea of squeezing a bulb to keep the shutter open seems more than a bit anachronistic. Why would anyone want to hold the shutter open manually when you can just dial in a preset value for the shutter speed and not worry about anything else?



The benefit of Bulb Mode is that it lets you keep the shutter open for as long as you want. The timing is not specified by you, the camera, or anything else which means it's entirely your decision whether to use a fast, slow or extremely slow shutter speed. Using Bulb Mode, it's possible to leave your shutter open for one, five, 10 minutes or even longer. The only limita-

tion is your camera's battery and your own degree of patience, which opens the door for some amazing photographic opportunities.

Finding Bulb Mode

The first step in using Bulb Mode involves figuring out how to access it on your camera, especially if you did not even know it existed and have never tried to look for it. Because Bulb Mode involves controlling the shutter, you might think that you need to first put your camera in Shutter Priority mode, but that's generally not the case.



Canon mode dial, B is Bulb.

How to Use Bulb Mode for Long Exposure Photography . . . Continued

For most cameras, you actually need to use Manual Mode and then set your shutter speed to as low as it can go. You will likely see decreasing speeds of 5 seconds (your display may show that as 5"), 10 seconds, and so on, all the way down to 30 seconds at which point one more click of the dial will put your camera into Bulb Mode. If this doesn't work for you, it's possible your camera simply doesn't have Bulb Mode (most DSLRs and mirrorless cameras do have it, on some Canons, it is on the Mode dial as B). If you really aren't certain, just Google the brand and the model of your camera along with the words "bulb mode" which will likely turn up some useful results.



Instead of showing a shutter speed along with a light meter, my camera's LCD screen now displays the word "bulb" to indicate that I have entered Bulb Mode.

Understanding Bulb Mode

Once your camera is in Bulb Mode a couple of things go a little haywire and you may think your camera is broken. Before you send it in for service, just know that everything is fine... but different. Right away you'll notice that your camera's light meter no longer works, and there is no indication of what exposure settings you should be using to get a properly exposed image.

This happens because your camera has no idea how long you want to leave your shutter open, and without that information, it doesn't know whether to indicate if the final image will be overexposed, underexposed, or just right. This can make Bulb Mode positively primitive territory, and if you have ever wanted to know what your photographic forebears had to deal with when taking pictures 100 years ago, you now know firsthand.

How to Use Bulb Mode for Long Exposure Photography . . . Continued

The best way to figure out which settings to use is to simply start experimenting. The more you use Bulb Mode you will start to figure out what settings like aperture and ISO might be appropriate given the scene you are photographing. However, there are some general tips that can be applied, which I will cover in the next section.



Holding the button

The other weird thing about Bulb Mode, which directly hearkens back to the earliest days of photography, is the manner by which the shutter is controlled. To open the shutter you press the shutter button (a sentence which is most likely eliciting rolled eyes due to how obvious it sounds). However, there's a catch.

The shutter stays open only while your finger is pressing the shutter button. It's just like squeezing a pneumatic bulb in the early days of photography. As you might guess by now, the way to close the shutter is to take your finger off the button. It's a strange feeling, and if you have a DSLR handy, I invite you to give it a try right now. Go get your camera, put it in Manual, spin the control dial until you're in Bulb Mode, and take a picture.

Using Bulb Mode

Did you snap a photo? I bet it felt kind of strange to have the shutter open and close only when you pressed and then released your finger from the button. This, of course, brings up the next logical question of how do you actually use Bulb Mode to get good pictures? While each person will use it in their own way, there are a couple of guidelines to think about if you want to get good results.



How to Use Bulb Mode for Long Exposure Photography . . . Continued

Low light

Bulb Mode is most useful when you have little to no ambient light. It is almost worthless in daylight or in a well-lit room (unless of course, you are using really good ND filters to block some of the light). The best time to try it is at night when everything is pitch black except what you are hoping to photograph.

Setting up to use Bulb Mode

It's important to keep your camera steady with a good tripod. You are typically dealing with really long exposures, and even the vibration from your finger pressing the shutter button can affect the resulting image. So the sturdier your tripod is, the better your images will turn out. If you have a cable release or some kind of remote shutter trigger for your camera, now is a great time to use it. Make sure you have one that either locks or counts the exposure for you (if you're using the small wireless one with your camera, you may need to click it once to open the shutter in Bulb Mode and click it again to close the shutter).

Note: *You cannot use the 2-second self-timer in conjunction with Bulb Mode, it will not work.*

Finally, try using a small aperture of f/8 or f/11 and a low ISO setting like 100 or 200 since the shutter speed is the independent variable in most Bulb Mode photography. This isn't a requirement, but depending on your subject you might need a wider aperture or higher ISO, particularly if you want to shoot images of stars or capture star trails or other astrophotography phenomena.



I was able to capture a bolt of lightning by holding the shutter open, and the long exposure also shows movement in the clouds.

How to Use Bulb Mode for Long Exposure Photography . . . Continued

When to use Bulb Mode

Now it's time to experiment and really have fun with Bulb Mode. Everyone will use it in a different way, but here are some ideas to help get you started.

- The next time a thunderstorm rolls in, use Bulb Mode to capture lightning strikes. The longer you leave the shutter open, the more lightning bolts you may be able to capture.
- Try light painting, and experiment with using different kinds of light on familiar subjects you might already have just laying around.
- Set up your tripod next to a road and shoot light trails as traffic passes by at night.
- For a variation on light trails, get a friend and have some fun with fire spinning. Note that safety must always come first in these situations, so be sure to keep yourselves, your gear, and the environment around you safe from damage. The best place is a beach with no one around.
- You don't need fireworks either. You can get great results with different sources of light from flashlights to sparklers to twirling glow sticks.

Using a long exposure helped me turn this ordinary jar of pasta into a surreal glowing work of art.



Conclusion

These ideas are just scratching the surface of what Bulb Mode can do. The best way to learn is to try it for yourself. If you have any particular tips for using Bulb Mode that you think others would enjoy, please share them.