

7 Tips for Wonderful Wildflower Photos

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Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “The earth laughs in flowers.” Perhaps that’s part of why we feel so compelled to capture wildflower images come springtime. This spring, as you imbibe in earth’s “laughter” and photograph its “smiles” put these tips to use to collect better images:

1) MORNING SHOTS ARE BEST.

You’ll find flowers not only their freshest in the A.M., but you’ll also often find them covered in photo-enhancing dew. Take advantage of that gorgeous moisture, which sparkles just right in morning’s first light.

2) MAKE FRIENDS WITH FOG & MIST.

Spring mornings can prove unpredictable and the weather might coerce you to stay snuggled under the covers. But when that sweet golden sunshine is absent, instead of staying in bed grab your macro lens and capture the drama created by the added condensation.

3) WIND CAN BE YOUR FRIEND, TOO.

True, in blowing wind photographing small objects like flowers can prove frustrating, especially that in-and-out focus phenomenon. But, wind can actually work in your favor if you slow your shutter speed. Try it and watch as the flowers before you take on new personas. Yes, surprisingly, blur done well can be beautiful!

4) CREATE YOUR OWN SHADE WHEN HARSH LIGHT ABOUNDS.

The nice part about photographing flowers is they’re small enough to shade easily. That provides the flexibility which allows you to work even in harsh light. While early morning and dusk are still the best times for photography, flowers lend themselves to mid-day photo shoots better than many of nature’s other models.

5) GET ON YOUR SUBJECT’S LEVEL.

Wear your bum-around clothes when photographing flowers so you can get down and dirty to capture the intricate beauty of these beauties. Let yourself be a kid again (so what about those grass stains!) and hunker down to photograph your petaled subjects at their most interesting angles and viewpoints.

6) DON’T PUT YOUR MAIN FLOWER DEAD-CENTER IN THE FRAME.

Remember the rule of thirds? An off-center subject pleases the eye much more than one that’s centered. And don’t forget to apply the rule of thirds to patterns, colors, and empty space as well.

7) TIPTOE THROUGH THE TULIPS.

As you get lost in photographing the flora be sure to treat nature’s landscaping gently. To us wildflowers are objects of beauty, but to bees, butterflies, and other animals, flowers provide a means of survival. And the forbs themselves provide a means to perpetuate the species.

Award-winning naturalist photographer, Jeff Parker, leads friendly and informative photo tours and workshops focusing on the flora and fauna of North and Central America. Join him this spring for a fun and educational wildflower photography workshop at the Red Belly Ranch in central-Texas.

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