



Padre Trails Camera Club

Monterey, California

Padre Trails Nature # 2 Macro Group A

1. *Asclapias californica* and Milkweed Bug

Your tell a good nature story here. However, I think it would have much more impact if you cropped the top half off. This is supposed to be a macro competition and I feel you are too far back. Your exposure is OK for the seeds but the milkweed bug needs a shadows adjustment..

2. Brown Pelican Eye (*Pelecanus occidentalis*)

This is a good idea but I find the image a bit too contrasty and a little soft. It looks as if you cropped a larger image to get this shot but I could be wrong.

3. Darkling Beetle (*Tenebrionidae*)

This is a very nice image of a Darkling beetle. Coleopterans are my favorite insect. You did pretty well with the depth of field although the ends of the antenna and the back legs are soft. The rest of the image is tack sharp. The dimples on the head, thorax and elytra are clearly shown as are the claws and number of tarsi on the legs. The exposure is great. Nice job.

4. Douglas Iris (*Iris Douglasiana*)

I love Douglas Irises and you are pretty sharp in the middle but I can't find much of a point of focus though. In other words I'm hunting for the nature story. I think your image is a little flat.

5. Female and male Cypress cones *Cupressus macrocarpa*

This makes a very nice nature story. You have the male and female cones right before the male cones start shedding their pollen. I like three and you have three female cones. Your exposure is great and your composition is

very nice. It would be nice if the third cone was in focus. Focus stacking or get back further and crop in. This would improve the image.

6. Fly agaric (*Amanita muscaria*)

These are just magnificent mushrooms. They remind me of Alice in Wonderland for some reason. Unfortunately, when I look at this image only a few of the light colored bumps are in sharp focus and the rest is soft. If you are going to show the underside of a mushroom it really should be sharp. Again this can be done with focus stacking or getting back further and then cropping in.

7. Globe Lily - *Calochortus albus*

Fairy lanterns are great wild flowers. Your exposure here is pretty good. Two is generally not a very good number for a pleasing composition. 1, 3, 5 or 7 etc is a better choice. The lily on the right is almost blown out while the one on the left is very nice. I think you will find the image more pleasing if you would crop the right one off and concentrate on the composition for the left flower. You can flip it to face right if you don't like it facing left. Try it and see what you think.

8. Gooseberry (*Ribes speciosum*)

Great exposure. Beautiful flower and your composition is very nice. My one criticism is the lack of depth of field. I just wish the other bud was in focus. Now since this is a flower and it can't move too fast you could do focus stacking Photoshop, Helicon Focus or Zerene to gain depth of field or just back up a little. To check my depth of field I will often use the Live View and zoom in to check the front and back of my subject. If I can't get both in focus I will take a shot of the front, middle and back and then stack the images. Try it you'll like it.

9. Green Darner Dragonfly (*Anax junius*)

Dragonflies are fantastic creatures. They are extremely fast flyers and many are just beautiful. They are often very difficult to photograph because every time you get close they take off. You have done a pretty good job here. The

light was very bright but you handled it well. Your depth of field is lacking however. Now you can't focus stack one of these unless you catch them early in the morning before they have warmed up so by getting back and using a f stop around 22 or 32 you would have a better chance of increasing your depth of field.

10. *Gymnopilus junonius*

Another gorgeous mushroom shot. Everything is in focus. Your depth of field is great. Exposure is right on. I might make a suggestion for your title and include the fact we are looking at its' gills. Very nicely done.

11. *Haliotis rufescens*-1

This is a beautiful abalone shell and a great catch. Your exposure is great and your focus and depth of field is very nice. However, I need a nature story for this as it is almost a still life. Mister or misses *Haliotis rufescens* is long gone and only its' old worn and polished house remains. You could say something like a *Haliotis rufescens* shell polished by the changing tides or something like that. I would enter this in a pictorial competition as this is a beautiful shell.

12. Hermit Crab (*Paguroidea*) & Sea Anemone (*Actiniaria*)

I like this image very much because it lets me look at this like guy and see things I normally would not see. Like its' blue ankles or its' one big claw or its' orange antennae. Your exposure is very good and it is pretty sharp if you are shooting through water at a tide pool. Good job.

13. Hermit Crab (*Paguroidea*)

We'll its' off to the ball. I do like the composition of this image but the other hermit crab is sharper and I think the exposure of its' underside could be enhanced with the shadows slider. Good capture though.

14. Miner's Lettuce (*Montia perfoliata*)

I really like the way you handled this. The exposure is beautiful. Your composition is great and the depth of field is good. You did very well with such a tiny flower.

15. Mushroom Cluster *Gymnopilus junonius*

Exposure is dead on. The image is very sharp and the depth of field is great. But I don't know that I would call this a macro image. These clusters are usually pretty big. I think I would enter this in your next general nature competition.

16. *Myosotis sylvatica*

Forget-Me-Nots in the rain. Very nice depth of field. Exposure is good. These are very pretty wild flowers that we seldom see up close. So I think you should go in close. You were back when you shot these beautiful flowers and this increased your depth of field but now I think you need to crop way in all the way around. It will make a much more interesting image.

17. Northern Walking Stick - *Plapheromera femorata*

This is a nice image of a walking stick. It is sharp throughout. Your composition is good. My only criticism would be the lighting. These guys don't move very fast so you could have used a diffuser. I know it's easy for me to say but it would improve your image as it is to contrasty.

18. *Pinus radiata* Cone Opening

This is a beautiful shot and a great nature story. Your colors are great and the exposure is nice. Your subject is nice and sharp. You could have just a little more room at the top but overall very nice.

19. Sea Anemones (*Actinaria*)

This is a tough shot because of the water. Unless you are shooting through a housing, getting your subject in sharp focus is really difficult especially when the tentacles are moving all over the place. Your exposure is good but overall the image is soft.

20. Sunflower Sea Star - *Pycnopodia helianthoides* - in tide pool

I don't know that this would qualify as a macro image as the Sunflower Sunstar is the largest sun star in the world. The image is exposed very well and it is sharp.

21. Tiger Swallowtail - *Papilio glaucus*

Your image is tack sharp. I think the image would be improved if you cropped in and had your Swallowtail at an angle. This would improve the composition. Cropping in would also make it more of a macro image. It looks like something took a bite out of his left wing. That is a nature story.

22. Underside of Mushroom (*Gymnopilus spectabilis*)

I don't quite know what to say about this image other than wow. This is absolutely beautiful. It belongs in National Geographic or Nature's Best. If you haven't you really should print this and hang it on your wall. It is just beautiful.

23. *Vanessa cardui* - Painted Lady

Ok so I'm never happy. For this image your exposure is good especially under bright lighting conditions. Your depth of field is pretty good and that which is in focus is very sharp. This image makes me want either more or less of the subject. Either a head shot or a full length shot. I don't think your 2/3rds works here. I feel your composition would work better if you cropped in from the bottom and left or gave us the entire Lady cropped tight.

24. Wild Radish (*Raphanus sativus*) After the Rain

Great light and the rain drops are very nice. As far as composition goes I think you should have given a little bit more room on the right hand side. My eyes follow that petal right off the side of the image. I do like those drops though.

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