

PADRE TRAILS CAMERA CLUB

Pictorial Competition #3 (Negative Space)

June 29, 2014 - Returns August 6, 2014

Judged by: Dan Danbom

Thoughts from the Judge

This competition had two criteria: the images were to present “color/pictorial” and “negative space.” Many of the entries had very nice representations of the first aspect - “color/pictorial”, but did not really present the idea of “negative space.” There were some images that succeeded in presenting both aspects, but without as much technical success. Since the final twist to the “color/pictorial” genre was emphasis on the “negative space” aspect, a less technically adept image that did make a more successful presentation of negative space was duly recognized.

On a personal and purely subjective note: One of the aspects of negative space, that was not a part of this original criteria, is that “negative space” is often something that contributes to the information about the positive space. The negative space can be a silhouette, less detailed underexposed, or receding element that helps define the context or meaning of the image. In the case of duly noted entries, the background/negative space added interest or detail that helps give context and form to the subject. The “negative space” adds an active contribution to the image.

Just black space around the central object does not usually denote negative space. It is often image area that does not contribute to the information of the image. Several images incorporated black backgrounds that did not contribute to the information of the image, or enhance the image but were only a contrast counterpoint. This was not considered “use of negative space.”

Since it was not a part of the original criteria, this was not used. But, an additional comment from one source included the concept of negative space elements being on a different focal plane of the main subject. In many images, this idea would help to distinguish the background/negative space from the subject.

One other note: where a suggested crop or color balance or contrast is suggested to an image, the image was placed in photoshop and a quick edit was tried to see if it was a justified suggestion. Often it gave a more pleasing result, so it was suggested. At least give it a try as an alternative way to look at the image.