

Photographing Central Oregon

Southwestern Oregon Community College
Instructor: Tony Mason

Spectacular Photographic Possibilities

Schedule

Photographing Nature
Central Oregon

Friday thru Sunday

Contact
**Community
Education**
at 541-888-7328
or
**www.socc.edu/
communityed**
for information
on exact **Dates,**
Fees & additional
information plus
how to register

**Participants are responsible
for their own Transportation,
Accommodations, Food and
Photographic Equipment**

John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

Between 54 and 6 million years ago, the central section of our state looked much different than it does now. Ranging from a tropical forest climate to one of primarily grasslands, this area has been routinely covered by volcanic ash and lava, leaving an almost continuous 40-million-year fossil record of diverse plant and animal life. For photographers, our interest lies in how these fossil beds have been eroded into the soft forms of the Painted Hills to the sculpted edges of Blue Basin.

As the light dances across these landscapes, we will watch and attempt to capture the wonder that it inspires, to bring back images that will let our viewers feel just some of what we experienced.

Sunrises, sunsets and all the light in-between will be there, to tempt our photographic equipment as we hope we brought enough batteries, memory cards and maybe even rolls of film to record this fanciful landscape.

During this 3-day photographic workshop, long-time SOCC

photographic instructor, Tony Mason, will guide participants on a journey using their existing equipment to it's best advantage to go beyond the "normal" snap-

shot. Composition, histograms, exposure, panoramas, depth-of-field, and white balance will just be a few of our topics. Evening viewing and discussion of images from our day's shoot will also include possible ways to enhance our images using Photoshop® to make the images look like what we saw and felt.



"Downtown" Mitchell, approximately 180° view - circa 2006

Why Central Oregon and the Painted Hills?

Why do I keep going back to the Painted Hills and the rest of the fossil beds year after year after year? It is kinda hard to explain.

My first visit to this part of the state was in 1976, on a geology field-trip with Don Stensland, professor at SOCC. Ever since then, I've made at least one trip to the fossil beds nearly every year. This small section of Oregon became one of my favorite photographic locations. One that I knew would provide the potential for great images every time I visited.

While I always had a camera with me, at first it was just to record memories. Looking back on those images, I wish I had taken more (in quantity), and done them more seriously (in quality).

30 plus years later and you would think that I would have shot everything that there is to shoot. Not even close... ever changing light, different plant growths, human interactions... all provide endless opportunities to make images. And now that I'm shooting digital, I need to get those shots I did early on with film into a 1's and 0's version (and hopefully I have learned enough over all these years to make them better).

During the late '70's and early '80's (in May, during my first visitations) there was an explosion of flower color, particularly at the Painted Hills, of the Chaenactis

and Bee-Plant. As my photography improved, the flower bloom (for lack of a better way to say it) became lack-luster (rain did not fall at the right time and in proper amounts, and temperatures were not conducive to growth). Now in the late 2000's, signs are pointing to potentially good blooms (let's keep our fingers crossed).

The soft contours of the Painted Hills Unit provide a stark visual difference of photographic possibilities when compared to the more rugged erosional formations in the Sheep Rock Unit. Let's not forget the juniper and ponderosa forests, the weathered wood of old buildings, various plants, viewing geologic and human history... they all add-up to a wonderfully photographically diverse location and workshop. I hope that you will be able to join me in this photographic exploration of this region.



More about the instructor

Tony Mason has been instructing students at Southwestern Oregon Community College (SOCC) on how to use their cameras since 1985 and recently expanded the courses to include "point-and-shoot" & DSLR digital cameras. Plus he conducts courses in the use of Adobe® Photoshop®.

Photo credits include a 16-page souvenir booklet for the Friends of Shore Acres and various local "advertisements" (including the 1999 Southern Oregon Vacation



Guide's cover image). He was also the prime photographer for the book *Homebuilding Basics: Carpentry* by Larry Haun (Taunton Press, 1999).

He is also currently a member of the Oregon Coast Photographers' Association (and web-manager), and the Superintendent of the Coos County Fair's Photography Department.

Photographing Nature Central Oregon

Basic Itinerary

- **Friday** - arrive and meet in Mitchell, late afternoon shoot at Painted Hills, review images
- **Saturday** - sunrise at Painted Hills, mid-day at Sheep Rock Unit, sunset at Painted Hills, review images
- **Sunday** - sunrise and morning shoot at Painted Hills, return home



Itinerary

Friday: We will meet at the “Little Pine Cafe”, in downtown Mitchell in the mid/late afternoon (exact time depends on the month of the workshop, most likely around 4 to 5 pm). Please take into consideration that it is an approximate 6-6½ hour (straight-through) drive from Coos Bay to Mitchell (via Reedsport> Drain> Eugene/Springfield> Sisters> Redmond> Prineville). Allow plenty of time to get there plus any photographic stops that you may make along the way (McKenzie River, Sahalie Falls, Cascade Mountains, Smith Rock State Park, etc.). You will also want to check into your accommodations or set up

camp before our meeting/gathering time.

After we are settled in, we will drive out to the Painted Hills Unit of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument in prime light (approximately 2 hours before sunset) and make images (we’ll also need to consider the open/close times of the restaurant and/or grocery stores, generally 7 pm).

During the evening, we will review the images we made, discuss what we did “right or wrong” and plan the next day based on conditions at hand.

Saturday: Early morning (sunrise to around 10 am) will see us back in the Hills to photograph areas that are best lit in the morning light. We will return

to town for breakfast then mid-day will find us driving east to the Sheep Rock Unit of the John Day Fossil Beds National Monument. Here we’ll visit Picture Gorge, the Cant Ranch (Park Visitor Center), Sheep Rock, Cathedral Rock and Blue Basin (where we’ll take a short hike into the strangely eroded badlands).

We’ll go back to the Painted Hills for another chance at the late afternoon light. If it is flower season, we will have arrangements with the Park Ranger to go “beyond the fence” to get those special images (supervised by Park personnel).



We will need to be aware that the restaurants/stores maybe closed before we get finished shooting and arrangements should be made ahead of time for an evening meal. The day will wrap up with another review of our images and discussion of tomorrow’s shoot.

Sunday: Another trip out to the Hills for a morning photography session (same time as Saturday) before we say our goodbyes with each other (between 10am and 12pm). Some of us may caravan back to the coast, looking for photographic opportunities along the way (the return route will be determined by those participating).

Participants are responsible for their own:

- Transportation (to, from and during the workshop)
- Accommodations
- Photographic gear (including film, batteries and accessories)
- Food (restaurants and/or grocery stores are generally available at/near all locations)
- Other items of a personal nature





This photographic workshop will be active and have long, full days. While hikes generally consist of no more than ¼ to ½ mile (one-way), they are not considered strenuous. Weather can be warm (into the 90's) but it is also possible that it could snow. Be prepared for cool mornings and evenings with potentially warm days

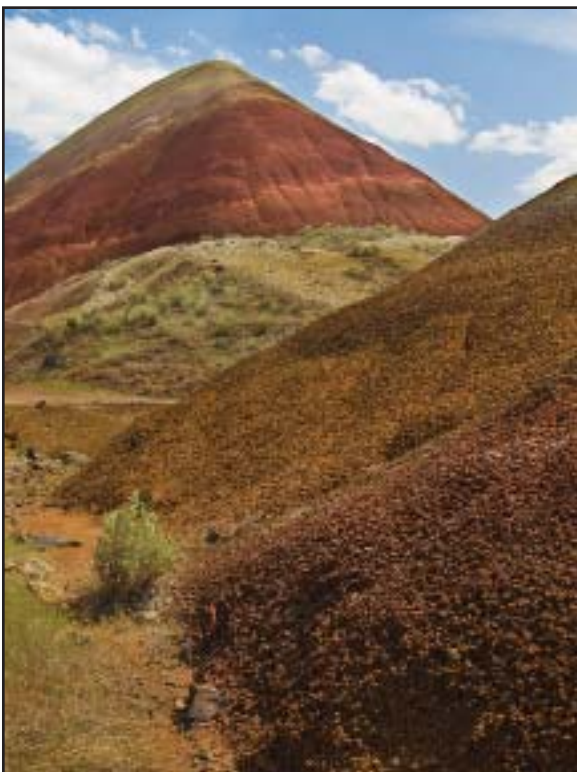
Participants are responsible for their own: Transportation (to, from and during the workshop); Accommodations; Photographic gear (including film, memory cards, batteries and accessories - use of a tripod is highly

recommended); Food (restaurants and/or grocery stores are generally available at/near all locations); and Other items of a personal nature.

SKY HOOK MOTEL: 101 HIGHWAY 26 (“overlooking” town), MITCHELL, OREGON 97750 **541-462-3569** skyhookmotel@aol.com
 Guest rooms: 6, Standard room rate range: from \$35.00 to \$60.00 Nightly, Credit Cards, Guarantee Required, Cancellation Policy (Local Time): 24 Hours Prior to Arrival.

OREGON HOTEL: PO BOX 95 (104 E. Main – “Mitchell Business Loop”), MITCHELL, OREGON 97750 **541-462-3027** <http://theoregonhotel.net> Guest Suites: 9½, Hostel: 1, Kitchenettes: 2, room rate range: \$15.00 to \$89.00, Non-smoking, no pets.

MITCHELL CITY PARK: RV and Tent CAMPING, PO BOX 97, MITCHELL, OREGON 97750 **541-462-3121** cityofmitchell@wavewow.com Hook-ups: 2, (water and electric hookups for RV's - no dump), rest rooms (flush toilets, cold water only). Showers available at Oregon Hotel (fee). \$17.00 per night (for RV's - advanced payment required - free for tents). Restaurants and groceries are available within a short walking distance. Camping gear must be provided by the participant (the instructor, as of press time, plans on camping and eating in the cafes for meals during this workshop).



LITTLE PINE LODGE: 100 E MAIN, MITCHELL, OREGON 97750 **541-462-3552** or **800-698-1935** lodge@littlepinecafe.com All rooms offer a Shared Bath, Shared Living area with TV and Library with access to Laundry Facilities and Telephone. Rates include a Full Breakfast at the Little Pine Café. <http://www.littlepinecafe.com/LODGE.html>

GASOLINE: While there is gasoline available in Mitchell, it is recommend that participants fill and top off their vehicles in Prineville (Mitchell is approximately 48 miles northeast of Prineville).

For additional information on the area:
www.nps.gov/joda/
www.littlepinecafe.com
www.wheelercounty-oregon.com/business2.html
<http://3dparks.wr.usgs.gov/johnday/index.html>

Contact
Community Education
 at 541-888-7328 or
www.socc.edu/communityed

for information on exact **Dates, Fees** & additional information plus how to register

Participants are responsible for their own Transportation, Accommodations, Food and Photographic Equipment

Information/Prices contained herein is subject to change without notice