

Night Sky Photography

Information

Date/ Time: Saturday, October 19, 1:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Sunday, October 20, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Meet at: [Oasis Visitor Center](#) (click on the link for a map to the meeting site)

74485 National Park Drive, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277

Instructor: Dennis Mammana, M. S., Astronomy, Sky Photographer, Syndicated Columnist

Overview

If you enjoy photography and are fascinated by the desert night sky, this two-day hands-on workshop is for you! Noted TWAN sky photographer Dennis Mammana will teach participants how to use even the simplest of cameras to create magnificent celestial portraits without resorting to composites and fakery. The class will begin with tips for setting up and shooting the night sky including a few personal tricks of the trade. That evening, participants will head to the Hidden Valley Picnic Area to try out their new knowledge under the real night sky. The next morning, the class will look at images from the previous night, discuss their pros and cons, and try out some basic image processing techniques in Adobe Lightroom that will make your photos pop. Any camera, digital or film, will work, if it can be adjusted manually, used with a tripod, remote control, and can take exposures of 15, 30, or more seconds. Students should have a good working knowledge of their equipment prior to taking this class. Students need to provide their own camera, tripod, camera equipment, and dress in layers as the nights can be cold.

Please bring a flash drive to share a field class image or two with the class on Sunday, if you'd like to get some personal tips.

Itinerary

Saturday, October 19, 1:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Oasis Visitor Center, Twentynine Palms

- Set-up and sky shooting lectures
- Dinner break, **bring your own food**
- Field class at Hidden Valley Picnic Area

Sunday, October 20, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Oasis Visitor Center, Twentynine Palms

- Image and processing discussion

What to Bring to the Course

Required Class Materials

- Camera with ability to take exposures of 15, 30, or more seconds
- Wide-angle or normal lens with aperture of f/2.8 or faster
- Memory card or color film 800 or 1600 ISO
- Camera Battery and backup
- Sturdy Tripod
- Remote Control or Camera Release
- Flashlight/head lamp with red lens or red cellophane to cover light
- Food for Dinner break
- **Your camera user manual (Very important!)**

Optional Class Materials

- Chair
- Bubble level
- Lens cleaner
- Camera bag
- Laptop computer
- Hiking poles

The 10 Essentials: Everyday in the Desert

- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water
- Hiking boots with traction soles
- Lunch and snacks
- Clothing layers
- Hat
- Flashlight
- Sunscreen/sunglasses
- Notebook and pencil/pen
- Whistle

Fitness Requirements

Participants must be in good physical condition for courses/activities in a desert that may be hot, dry, windy, and sometimes surprisingly cold.

Hike Level

Easy

Guidelines

- You are responsible for your safety.

- Park your car in designated areas only. Parking along the side of the road is dangerous to you and the environment.
- Rattlesnakes are present in the desert. Avoid contact with wildlife. Put your hands and feet only where you can see them.
- Stay with the group. If you get lost, stay put.
- Drink plenty of water. If you run out, notify the instructor or the Desert Institute Representative.
- Watch your step. Some of the class is at night, please bring a flashlight and beware of uneven ground and equipment.
- Before leaving the class, check out with Desert Institute Representative.

Instructor Biography

Dennis Mammana, M.S., Astronomy, has delivered the wonder and mystery of the cosmos to audiences for over three decades and is a syndicated newspaper columnist with [Creators Syndicate](#) and author of six books on popular astronomy. Having photographed the night sky for more than 50 years, Mr. Mammana is an invited member of [TWAN](#)—an international team of the most highly acclaimed sky photographers on the planet. Mr. Mammana continues to photograph the heavens from around the world, but mostly from his desert home in Borrego Springs. His work can be enjoyed online at dennismammana.com.

Suggested Reading

* The Desert Institute staff/instructors will attempt to accommodate participant's needs; however we reserve the right to deny a student participation in the course due to concerns regarding health and safety issues.