

Winter Light: Photographing Desert Preserves

Information

Date/ Time: Saturday, December 7, 8 AM – 4:30 PM

Meet at: [Whitewater Exit](#) off of Highway 10 (click on the link for a map)

Instructor: Craig Fucile, Photography Instructor, University of California, Riverside Extension

Overview

Join us for a day of photography in two special desert places off the beaten track: Whitewater Preserve, and Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve. From the Whitewater River, to McCallum pond in an oasis of California fan palms, you'll experience the beauty of water in the desert. Winter is an excellent season to photograph the low desert, with its cool temperatures, longer shadows and views of distant peaks.

The day consists of photographic field sessions, group instruction and one-on-one assistance from your instructor. Your questions will be answered! You'll learn tips and techniques for controlling sharpness, exposure, making panoramic photographs, and using lenses, along with creative exercises in photographing the desert landscape. Class begins in the morning close to the rugged cliffs of Whitewater Preserve. After lunch, we relocate to Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve for afternoon field sessions among stately palms. Hiking at each preserve is easy – to moderate; we'll be walking on trails that are mainly level. Participants are encouraged to bring a tripod with their camera(s).

Itinerary

Saturday, December 7, 8 AM

Whitewater Preserve

- 8 am: Meet at the Whitewater exit off of Highway 10. We will carpool into the Whitewater Preserve. Instructor discusses class schedule and format, park rules and personal safety. Photographic field sessions along Whitewater River Trail.
- 9:30 am—10:15 am: Break Time, in picnic area.
- 10:15 am—12 noon: Instructional and photo sessions in the area.
- 12 noon—12:45 pm: Lunch in picnic area.
- 12:45 pm— 1:30 pm: Car caravan to Thousand Palms Oasis Preserve.
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Thousand Palm Oasis Preserve

- 1:30 pm—3:00 pm: Photographic field session to McCallum pond.
- 3:30 pm—4:30 pm: Field session in the main oasis.
- 4:30 pm: Class ends.

Instructional Methods

1. Lecture
2. Demonstrations
3. Example photographs
4. Instructor assisting participants

Participant Activities

1. Making photographs
2. Learning from their camera
3. Questions and answers
4. Creative exercises

What to Bring to the Course

Required Class Materials

- At least one camera (or a film camera)
- At least one lens
- Remote switch or cable release for camera
- Extra camera battery and memory card
- **Your camera user manual**

Optional Class Materials

- Circular polarizer
- Lens shade
- Tripod
- 10 photos on a laptop, display device or as prints, that you have questions about.
- Materials for making notes

The 10 Essentials: Everyday in the Desert

- Day pack
- 4 quarts of water
- Hiking shoes with traction soles
- Lunch and snacks
- Clothing layers
- Hat
- Sun glasses
- Sunscreen
- 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

Moderate

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.
- 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.
- Before leaving the class, check out with the Desert Institute Representative.

Instructor Biography

Craig Fucile, B.A., Physical Geography, currently teaches photography for University of California, Riverside Extension. He has also taught for UC Irvine Extension, UC Santa Cruz Extension, University of La Verne, the Sierra Club and Friends of Photography. A long time instructor, Fucile has taught numerous photography workshops in western landscapes that he enjoys photographing including: Joshua Tree, Death Valley, Eastern Mojave, Owens Valley, Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, Anza-Borrego, Kings Canyon, Sequoia. During Fall 2017 he was an artist in residence for Angeles National Forest/ San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. He received the Fall 2010 Instructor Excellence Award from UC Riverside Extension and the 2007 Distinguished Instructor Award from UC Irvine Extension.

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.