

at Joshua Tree National Park

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Photographing Soda Springs and the Mojave National Preserve

Information

- Date/ Time: Friday, November 20, 1PM – Sunday, November 22, 11:30 AM
Meet at: [Desert Studies Center](#) (click on the link for a map to the meeting site)
At the end of Zzyzx Rd., off Interstate 15, about 6 miles south of Baker, CA.
Instructor: Craig Fucile, Photography Instructor, University of California, Riverside Extension

Join us for an opportunity to stay in an exceptional part of the California Desert and devote three days to making new photographs. The class is based at the Desert Studies Center, south of Baker, CA. The Center— also known as Zzyzx (zy-zix)— lies inside in the Mojave National Preserve and is a former health spa with interesting buildings, palms, ponds, springs, plus fine views of Soda Dry Lake and desert mountains. Special emphasis is placed on photography in the field to allow students to work with color, light, shapes, and textures of the desert at an unhurried pace. On one half-day field session we'll photograph lava beds and a Joshua tree forest. Two night photography sessions are scheduled to take advantage of dark skies over Zzyzx. Instructional topics include: exposure, making panoramic photographs, HDR photography, controlling image sharpness.

Hiking on field sessions easy – to moderate. Participants are encouraged to bring a tripod with their cameras.

Itinerary

Friday, November 20, 1 PM

Desert Studies Center

- 1:00 pm - Meet in Center parking lot. Orientation, room check-in.
- 2:00 pm - Meet in dining area. Introductions, class format. Bring 5 of your photographs.
- 3:30 pm - Meet at east end of oasis. Photography until sunset.
- 6:30 pm - Dinner
- 7:15 pm - Watch video about natural and human history of the Soda Springs area.
- 8:00pm - 9:30 pm Existing light photography at Zzyzx.

Saturday, November 21

- 6:30 am - Sunrise photography at Zzyzx.
- 7:30 am - Breakfast.
- 9:00 am - Leave for field session at lava beds and Joshua trees along the Kelbaker Rd.

- 1:00 pm - Lunch at Zzyzx
- 2:30 pm - Instruction and viewing photographs in lab.
- 4:00 pm - Field session at car graveyard.
- 4:45 pm - Photography until sunset along Zzyzx Rd.
- 6:30 pm - Dinner
- 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm Night photography at Zzyzx.

Sunday, November 22

- 6:30 am - Sunrise photography at Zzyzx.
- 7:30 am - Breakfast
- 9:30 am - 10:30 am Instructional session in lab.
- Check-out of rooms.
- 11:30 am - 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 digital 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.
- Hiking Poles

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

Easy / 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 park. 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, Desert Institute Representative or the Desert Studies Center site manager.
- 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. 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.