

Moose Podcast #428

Moose Peterson Howdy. Howdy and welcome the Moose Podcast Number 428, The Water Fowl Dove. How are you folks doing? We're just a week away from Santa Claus coming, or could be Mr. UPS or somebody else bringing those goodies to you. Man, this year has flown by because, you know, the week after Christmas, it's New Year's, man. That's just, what, 15 days away? That boggles my mind. Hey, I. I understand it's been a busy week. I had a great week down last week in Arizona. Yeah, marvelous time. Probably the reason why I'm inspired to do this particular podcast now. I hope you've had a great week as well. Appreciate the few of you have written and all your very fine seasonal wishes means a lot to me, so thanks ever so much. So I am again recording using the Adobe Podcast. I am using the new beat to enhance speech. I appreciate a couple of you telling me that you actually can hear a difference. It's a course A.I. and A.I. is making me sound better, so that's always appreciated. Remember, you can find more information on the blog post for the podcast, which includes a photograph that supports what I'm talking about. Other links like last week. Their link was there for the z6. Three settings that I had updated as well are other good stuff. And remember over on Spotify. Spotify you can actually we can have a conversation. You can listen, stream the podcast. You can make comments, ask questions. I'm here to help you any way I can, and that's just a natural way of reaching me. Now, as you can hear, I'll probably cough more than once during this by apologies. I had laughed so much previous week at the Nikon Ambassadors Summit that I actually came home and had lost some of my voice, which is now kind of coming back. But every so often I do have a wheeze or a cough, so my apologies. My good friends in Bedford cam that's Bedford dot com. With all those stores including the new one there in Kansas City, they are just gone. But Zurich and you guys are driving it. So thanks ever so much. The elves there at Bedford tell me that they've got stuff going out the doors. They have some great questions. And I love a couple of you have actually sent your spouse. I love this. Sent your spouse to Bedford's. Buying presents for yourself. I know one person who he they keep the box for. The lens is under the tree, but he's already enjoying that Christmas present. That. That's just so cool. I love it. And Bedford's there. The perfect place to send your spouse with your Christmas list. They've got the inventory, the prices, the moose discount. And, hey, they have got some great deals, including some amazing end of the year Nikon specials sales. So head to Bedford's town that Moose sent you. You'll see that moose discount after your purchase and they are just great folks. Thank him for sponsoring the Moose podcast and of course helping us photographer with us photographers with our great passion visual storytelling. So thank you Bedford's. Had a marvelous week last week. In the most unlikely spot. You'll see a moose sharing his sport shooting report for this place this week. That is the riparian preserve at Water Ranch. Now that's a really fancy term and it's actually spectacular place kind of in the middle of the city, in the middle of the desert, outside of Phenix. Where a lot of waterfowl show up. Now these are not, for the most part, habituated waterfowl. Some of them are incredibly shy and hard to photograph. But there's a marvelous location there that there's the same kind of plays playing out in my backyard in Montana. I know there is places in the Central Valley, California, and the central U.S. and the East Coast where you have access to waterfowl and waterfowl. They're just a treasure to photograph that a lot of people don't really spend time with because it's a challenge. Now, in the perfect world, you would have one

of those flow hides. I would love to have a flow high, but you're talking about a minimum of a \$2,000 investment just for that float high. And then you have to have a place where you can actually use it. That's a challenge. So rather than talk about what would be the perfect world, let's talk about what we normally would do. And that is shooting from the shore. Now, down at the preserve, you've got I call the dock, you've got this this semi floating walkway that's that's out in the water about 15, 20 feet from the shore. That extra little difference going out there is just a marvelous place to shoot. And there's many places that have boardwalks. And so in this process, the first thing you have to think about is when you feel people walking, you have to remember stop shooting because the platform you're standing on is wobbling no matter what you do. Proper long lens technique or vibration reduction, it will make a difference. You're going to have autofocus generally pictures. Now let's just kind of go down and start from the very beginning of this process and think about this. So the first thing we have to do is got to determine the gear that we want to shoot with. And that's a challenge. The old adage really works out here, right? The if you don't go out with your longest lens, you'll come back short. Now, I know of a couple of places in the San Francisco Bay area that you can shoot waterfowl pretty effectively with a 70 to 200 or like a 7000 with a2x on it. But those locations are kind of rare, but you have to start doing some basic homework. Now, the preserve down here is a reclamation set of ponds or six big ponds, and there are many locations throughout the U.S. where the reclamation ponds, the sewage treatment plants, allow you to go out there and photograph the birds on them. There's a marvelous one in Lincoln City, Oregon. There's a great one down in Southern California, Irvine. The San Joaquin River Preserve. These locations bring in waterfowl and right now is a great time to do it. Fall and winter. It's not really in the spring. They tend to come down from their migration and they find these ponds. That's where they winter. You can find some real rarities. So you want to work with what gear you have. In my case, I shot exclusively with the Z on a 40 C of shooting a 600 and 840 millimeters. This past week I was using the z63, and one of the things I want to mention that's kind of I think you should think about is we kind of get stuck in autofocus mode, refined one. And of course, that's the goal. You find one that works for you kind of stick with it. But you might want to explore. So I did this last week. I went to the C2 using the 25 by five grid in that and then having the critter detection. And I'm telling you, it worked marvelous. If you've listened to past you heard me talk about the 3D or auto area. In this case, waterfowl. That mode were great. So my tripod long lens body shooting continuous high. Now you have to start photographing the birds. First thing keep in mind is that when you first arrive either on the shoreline or on the boardwalk or the dock, in this case, that the bird's natural response is to move away from you. And there's nothing more challenging to photograph than a true mallard duck. If it's a duck pond mallard. They'll come right up to you like they're expecting it. Bread. And that's bad form, by the way. Don't give them bread. If it's a real mallard, that's probably one of the hardest birds of all birds to get close to. So the first thing you might do is when you arrive, be set, ready to go. If you can put Patel covers on, have that all done before you get to that shore to where you're going to photograph them, have everything set up on the tripod. So when you get there, you put your gear down and you stop. You're done, and then you wait. How long? A minimum of 10 minutes. Give them at least 10 minutes to get used to your presence. And some places you have to realize that you've got people, you've got dogs. Other things will go by. Every time they do, that clock kind of will get set again. So just take a deep

breath. Now, when you want to go, I highly recommend the first couple of hours of sunrise and then the last couple of hours before sunset. You don't want that water really burnt out. So the highs, the sun's too high. And on the skyline, you're going to have to deal with really some hard light and the beautiful plumage of ducks, waterfowl, you really want that soft light. So within that first couple hours, sunrise, my favorite time, photograph, waterfowl, I'm typically going to set myself up. So as I look at the ducks, the sun is either on my back or on my side at at worst, and I'm looking for that light to go across, kiss the waterfowl. And here's the real trick in this is to light up the other side of the pond because that color, whether it be trees or reeds, whatever, is going to reflect into the water. And that's where you get that gorgeous water. And that's probably one of the the big things about photographing waterfowl is the background now if you're shooting on a gray, overcast day. That great is going to be reflected in the water. And gray water just is not really attractive. You know, gray skies, gray moods, that kind of thing. But if there's some activity going on, the water. You'll get other reflections besides Gray, and then you kind of get this. You can get this very woven kind of tapestry, which is really quite special and unique. And then if you have like some fall color, you'll get some yellow in there, sea of gray skies, and you have a reflection of yellow fall color, green, yellow or great colors, and you've get a ring that dark or American religion or possible group, anything going through that. Those reflections then set this great background so you don't have to. Your lens will be wide open. You have to shut it down wide open. It gives you the fastest shutter speed and there are times where you more than likely will probably have to raise your ISO 800, 1600, you know, because you those little sweet little ducks are, of course, bobbing up and down in that water. In that water is getting stirred up by water. What other waterfowl see it, you know, compensate that and kind of watch as they bob around of course then they've got lateral movement as they they swim from point A to point B, so that's a lot of movement. So that's shutter speed. What should you go for? Well, to be honest with you, you probably don't want anything less than one to 50th with 500 to 1000 of a shutter speed, probably going to yield you better results as they are zipping around back and forth. And so early morning, you can easily crank that ISO to 1600 to get that kind of shutter speed. Now as you think about those nuts and bolts. One of the things you're gonna think about is the actual distance between you and that waterfowl. Yeah, that could be a challenge. One thing to think about is to slowly pan with waterfowl as a slowly come towards you. Practice your beer panning. Look at your autofocus. And then when they get to the size you want in the viewfinder, then take their photographs as they go by. It will be a little time consuming, you might think, but the actual energy that comes through that photograph as you pan with them and they're coming over the little ripples behind them and you have that gorgeous water, you can get some really unique shots. And in the process of photographing waterfowl, don't expect to come back with thousands and thousands of clicks. Doesn't really work that way. You just need one or two individuals that will come up to you and that will make your your morning totally successful. You come back with really great photographs and you'll be inspired to go out and work on some more. It's like I mentioned just this brief period in late fall winter when they've come down from the northern latitudes where they're nesting, that we get the chance to photograph them in this process. Couple of things to think about. One will be exposure. Some ducks. Let's say like a Western grebe. They're all white. Black. You've got to watch your exposure. I'll show you all the information in that white area. Can really just blow out if you have any kind of horror like you might have to

underexposed for them. What about, like, a ruddy duck that has a big white patch cheek on their head? Mate, if you have a good looking male, he's got that beautiful blue bill. Again, exposure, compensation. You want to make sure you get the detail in those feathers. And if you go and shoot just when you've got the perfect light, you can have a really short day of it's bald sky. So keep that in mind that exposure compensation can extend your shooting period and perhaps bring out information in that plumage that is important to that particular species. I mean, if you're photographing, for example, a white pelican, they're all white. So you don't have to have all that information. It's where you have little birds with little spots of white that are important. You want to make sure you capture that in that photographic process. Now, the other thing to think about is the fact that you need to have some ability to identify the birds, the drakes, the hens. They look quite different. And some of the hands are just kind of brown puff balls. Some of them like the Godwill hen or the American wedge in hand. They really are very spectacular. When you get close, detailed shots of their flanks, the cobra feathers, really gorgeous detail in some males. Again, the American widgeon or say the mallard or rhinos about they've got drilling tails. A lot of them have these very iridescent feathers on their head. And they have to they get a turn their head just right to see those colors or ring that duck all that great purple. Those colors come out when you have some really bright overcast and they've got this kind of giant kind of God scrim that the light is bouncing around. So there's times where you say, Oh, it's gray skies. Maybe I should go out. But if you've done a little maybe ahead of time research, you see these species on the water. You might say, Oh, now is the perfect time rather than not the time. So you got to do a little, maybe get out the siblings, look at the different species, see what you want to target. And if you really want to. Up your game and really make some really amazing shots. One of the big challenges that I like to do is to find shots where I have both the male and female in the same frame. And as soon as you do that, you then have to what, close the lens down to have more depth of focus. And you do that, your shutter speed goes down slower. She got all these processes that you need to, you know, deal with that. Well, it's just part of the process. So think that all through as you go out there, challenge yourself and you probably will get hooked on the white waterfowl. You will do the waterfowl dove. You folks have a great week. Appreciate you stopping by. And remember to make every click your story.