

Moose Podcast #442

Moose Peterson Howdy and welcome to Moose Podcast number 442, Finding a Home. Hey, you guys have a great week. I've heard some from many of you this past week. That's very cool. You guys are doing some exciting, fun photography out there, which is, well, that's what it's all about, right? And I appreciate you sharing what you're doing and the questions. This week's podcast comes from a couple of you folks. Ted, this is for you especially. You know, I appreciate you guys reaching out in the conversations. I mean, photography is all about communicating, right? And there's many forms of doing it. And I'm grateful when you reach out guys by email and say hello and ask questions. I feel useful when I can answer questions. So thanks ever so much. Wow, still using the Adobe Beta Podcast AI voice. Still set on fifty I, I, It just makes the difference. It makes it easy. If you haven't tried it out, you should because it's, it's all you do is just start talking as obviously I do. Now, remember that you can go to the blog post, uh, for the podcast. Uh, you can see photographs there from, uh, that I might be talking about during the episode and any other links that I mentioned in the. Podcast. At the same time, uh, remember that you can listen to the podcast, any of your favorite places. You're heading to Spotify. There's a place there not only to download the transcript that's created by Castos, but you can also leave comments and ask questions. That's there for you as well. Resources to help you and your photography move forward. So that's Spotify at your favorite app store. Well, Nikon has got some sales still going the end of the end of the month, March 30th. And where would you want to go and take advantage of that? Nikon sale, well, no other than Bedford's camera, bedfords.com. My good friends there, they've got the goodies, you know, they've got, uh, my favorite, uh, New one I'm going to talk about again today, the Nikon stabilized binoculars. They have lenses and bodies. Well, they have everything. They have, you know, multiple things, not just Nikon gear. All those stores have lots of photographic gear. And the best thing is they stock those stores with really great people who have the information that The advice to help you and your photography move forward. And then once you get the gear, you know you're going to get it at the best price, buying it at Bedford's. And after you check out, you mentioned my name, you're going to see that 5% back. So it's, Bedford's, I mean, it's like, why would you want to go anywhere else? Bedford's.com. My good friends there. Thank them for helping us photographers, helping Moose, and of course, sponsoring the Moose podcast. So I mentioned this little product on the website a couple days ago. The Small Rig Hawk Lock. And, you know, I gotta tell you. I've been using them and using them more lately. Man, they are slick as snot. These are the coolest little doodabs for, I don't know how they make money at \$19, but uh. They were great. Got a couple more, uh, put one on the microphone. So it just, it's, I don't, it's just in and off the stand and a heart beat. I mean, it's just. The uses almost seem endless. So you might want to check that out. It's the coolest little, uh, doodab I have ever seen. And, uh, later in just a few moments, I'll be heading off to Costa Rica, uh, where I'll be for the next nine days. Heading down to, uh, Just enjoy the rainforest. Uh, they have, I'm told, a crazy number of species down there that we didn't see last year. So I can't wait to do that. It is one of our photographic adventures. Just announced another one there on the website. Going to back to Florida again for spring. Had such a great one at Wakadahatchee this year in that area. Going to go back down Center more around Orlando area, which has got some great stuff. So, you know, there's, there's a bunch of, you know,

adventures there. If you want to join us, Check them out. Remember my galleries there. You can see images we have taken if it's a Adventure we've done in the past. And then, of course, give the office a call. Talk to my lovely wife, Ms. Sharon. She'd be helping to answer your questions. Get you registered. Have you come out for some great fun and photography? Well, book recommendations, one that I have mentioned many times, written up many times, but this is the time of year where it is almost essential to And I went to my library shelf to grab it. And I've got all the additions. There's been a number, even though the current one is second. I have four iterations on my shelf. It just keeps getting bigger and better and uh, it's nest eggs and nestlings of North American birds. Uh, and it's uh, by Paul Barrick and Colin Harrison and it is It is just an amazing, amazing book. It has got more information. It has 670 books. Species in it. I mean, that's a ton of information along the color plates that go with everything it's describing. Never, to be honest with you, noticed the back cover. Um, but boy, it's got some of the who's who's, you know, praising this book. I mean, the first one, Paul Johnsgaard, who is, you know, Paul is everybody. I mean, that's, He is the, he's the, he's the man. So nest eggs and nestings of North American birds. I'm going to talk about it a whole lot more here in a second. But, uh, that is the book I highly recommend you get. It's just, uh, it's phenomenal. Finding a home. There's a lot of things that, uh, right now we could be, uh, Putting under that title. But actually it is, well, it's what, March 24th and uh, Even though it is, huh, it is snowing out the window right now. Supposedly the mountain passes are getting two feet of snow. It is spring. We have gone past March. What was it? March 20th was the first day of spring. And the birds, they don't have iPhones and calendars. They just go by the sun and what's happening and And spring means, yeah, baby birds. Now, baby birds and nesting, you know, to find that home, that nesting means Is a really important part of their cycle. And they, they tend to do it. Uh, this is nothing is carved in stone because there's always going to be some exceptions. The first one would be like the Clark's Nutcracker who nest in the dead of winter. Wackadoos they are. But most birds nest in the spring for a couple of reasons. One, uh, where they nest, shrubs and trees, uh, Tend to start getting their green foliage in spring, the thickest and the densest. And that, of course, gives the nest some invisibility and protection from predators. Two, with that, the flowers and the leaves comes the insects and or the nectar or both, which most birds, you know, depend on. So it's just the natural evolution that spring is when birds will nest. Photographing nesting birds I've talked about before and it's, it's just an amazing, rewarding, fun time that I personally really enjoy. And, you know, there is, I'll be honest with you. There is nothing worse than come to July for me and I have not got much time in with nesting birds. Watching that process and photographing it, man, it is just unbelievably rewarding, both emotionally and mentally, but also photographically. But to get to the point of photographium, you've got to find the home. You've got to find that nest. And now is the time to do it. Well, how would you do it? If you've never done it before, I'm going to assume you haven't, I'm going to, you know, lay that out. And in this day and age, it's changed so much from when I started out. The two tools that I'm going to highly recommend that you have, let's make it three, tools that you have before you start out is one, you have Merlin, the app Merlin on your smartphone. Two, a pair of binoculars, and I gotta tell ya, the new Nikon stabilizers, I got the 12x25s, are amazing. Now, I know, binoculars are binoculars. Until you go out in the field and you realize you want two hands to work. So if you've got an iPhone with Merlin going and you're looking to see who's calling, And then you want to use a pair of

binoculars to find that bird that's calling. You either have to put the iPhone down, have it strapped to your arm or some other way so you can use two hands for binoculars. The Nikon Stabilized Binoculars. The one thing I love the best is I can use them with one hand and the bird is going all over the place in the exopupil. You can hold them steady with one hand. Uh, so that gives you two hands to operate, which right off the bat, boy, that puts you way ahead. So with these two tools, You're going to go out to your favorite location, hopefully your backyard, and you're going to start being a sleuth. You don't have to, you're not going to get a whole lot of steps in, but you're going to start listening and looking. The camera gear, the camera gear is not even out yet. We are just in the finding a home place. So, you can get out your app. I'm going to use me as an example, of course. So, right now, the American Robins showed up, oh, boy, almost three weeks ago now. And the males show up first and the males, of course, going to be the brightly colored one. They're going to have that beautiful, beautiful, um, orange red chest. And they start by just taking care of themselves and seeing if where they have stopped at the moment has got a lot of food. And that's a really important part of this process. They have enough food and water. So if you want to encourage nesting in your yard, that's two things that you want to make sure you've got going. Then the American robins were going to hang around for a while and all of a sudden some more will pop up. So at this point we had the one gorgeous male and we've had a nest, uh, on the property the last at least two years for sure. So more likely the ones that are coming back this year are young from those nests. And then as more come in, males and females, they kind of start sectioning off the property. They kind of make these little somewhat temporary territories. And they're looking for what? The best nesting place. So a place that's secure, safe, looking for food and for water that they believe will be constant to feed their kids. And once they find that spot, The males start broadcasting. That's where Merlin comes in. You'll find where there's, especially early in the morning, lots of birds calling. Some of them are just moving through. Some are residents. American Robin is a springtime resident here. And you'll hear the male singing. So Merlin's going to tell you who's singing. You're gonna use your bins to see who it is with your eyes, see where they are singing from, Because that song post is really important. That's going to tell you where they're thinking about setting up a territory and where they're going to try to bring in a female for the birds and the bees thing. Now, when you do that, that's where you're going to pull out nest eggs and nest things of North American birds. Because you open up the page. I should have done this prior. I'm going to go to American Robin just to stay current. And you're going to look up. Robin, or American Robin. Let's see how it's indexed in this book. It is going to be, is it, uh, do-do-do. Yep. Page 257. Robin, American. And you head in there and it's going to start giving you some information that you can start using in finding that home. So for example, um, do you know where American robins actually would nest? As in, in a tree, in a shrub, on the side of the house, at a paint can? Where do they actually like to nest? Uh, so it goes off, off the bat and you start reading it and it says nest in a tree or shrub or Or in the fork or on a branch on a ledge of a building or occasionally a post. Generally some type of ledge, never on the ground. Usually three to twenty-five feet high. So there's your first piece of really important information the book's going to give you. What zone are you going to look? So three feet to twenty-five feet up, right? And a nest is twenty-five feet up. It's not going to be one. It's going to be really practical to photograph. One that's three foot, that'd be like, wow, you're living high in the hog. You're going to watch those birds and listen to those birds. I'm going to

stick with the robin because that's what I have been working with personally this last week. And you keep listening and you start Tuning into just their call, you'll see that it will slowly start changing. Why is it changing? Probably one of two reasons. One, there's another male trying to Ease himself into that first male's territory. You'll see him chased and you'll hear this. I'm not going to take their call. I'll be silly sounding. And you'll hear this call. You know that he's chasing off another male. The other distinctive set of calls are the ones where, for lack of better terms, he's wooing the female. He sees the female and he's trying to get her attention when they are successful. Going back to the nest eggs and nestlings, you'll find out that the nest they build, a bulky, untidy structure of twigs, coarse grass, weed, and grass stems. And sometimes strings, rags, and other debris with a smooth inner cup of mud with a thin lighting of dry grasses built mainly, and this is important, by the female. So with that, when you locate that male and then you see the female hanging out, then you know they're kind of paired up. And then when you see the female out gathering nesting materials, twigs, grasses, and mud, you know that she's busy building the nest. So at this point, you can put Merlin away. It's done its job. And you just spend your time with the bins. And you watch. And you watch. You watch where, and they're gonna tell you, they're gonna show you, and they're gonna have kind of a distinctive pattern. They're gonna go into that shrub or up to that ledge. Um, around here they make a lot of nests in, um, people have Skulls on the outside of their house from their, their trophies, you know, moose or, or, uh, elk or deer and, They make a lot of nests on the top of the skull using the rack as a way of supporting their nest. So you just watch it. You don't do anything photographically still. You just watch it. Because all of a sudden, the female will stop going back and forth to that nest with material and And she'll just be on the nest. And that's when you know eggs are getting laid. Now, birds do it differently. Some species will lay all their eggs at one time. Some will lay their egg one day apart. So this, going back to nest eggs and nestlings, you're going to learn that part. And it starts right off the bat going, continuing with America Rob and says breeding season. Early April in south, as in south, you know, southern part of North America, to mid-May in north of the range, which is up where I'm at. They will possibly double or triple clutch, which means they'll raise a group of kids, kick them out, and maybe do it again. It tells you the kind of eggs, the shapes, the size. Then it gets down to incubation. This is the important part. So you're watching that nest. You see that female all of a sudden sedentary on that nest. And that's when incubation is starting. And for the American Robin, it's done only by the female and it's eleven or fourteen days. So you're going to watch that female when you see it on that nest and it's not moving anymore. You're going to figure out in the calendar eleven days and you're going to keep watching it. Because as soon as those eggs hatch, as soon as they do, all hell breaks loose and the parents are busy. Now is when you're gonna get that camera out. Get to clicking. So they incubate for eleven to fourteen days and they're nestlings, which means they've hatched out of their eggs. They're living in the nest only. For fourteen to sixteen days. So if you add that up, you've got twenty-five to thirty days of photography time at the nest. Now, the photography part. Not gonna really get into it right this now but, ah, the photography part, don't let it scare you. Yes, you have to be very sensitive to what you are photographing and how you're photographing it. Uh, there's a lot on the website already about How to photograph nesting birds. But I'm here to tell you, you can do it safely. You can get those photographs. Remember that no photograph is worth sacrificing the welfare of the subject. But You can have one of the most grandest experiences in wildlife

photography and it could be just around the corner in your own backyard. And the process starts now in finding a home. You folks have an absolutely marvelous week. I hope you've got spring. It's warm. You're out with your camera. And just remember to make every click your story.