



VOL. 35 ISSUE 1 • SEPTEMBER 2026

IN FOCUS

www.niagaraphoto.org

Cover Photo by: Terry Rotella

President's Message - Dave Merrow

Welcome you to a new season of the Niagara Association of Photographic Art.

Our Executive is a mix of new and continuing members, a ratio of about 50/50-a great blend of the old and new. Your Executive recognize NAPA's past accomplishments and are committed to build on those to create new opportunities to enhance our photographic skills, educational opportunities, the sharing of ideas and creating a social environment for like-minded individuals.

As we start the season, we have a new Constitution to better reflect our current state, an updated Member Handbook, updated Competition guidelines adding the Digital monochrome category, and revised rules for image submissions. We've added an additional month to our season to give us more opportunity to enjoy our love of photography and that's just the start!

The Speaker and Zoom program is full of very interesting and diverse offerings and coupled with a wide range of outings together provide for great learning experiences. Our Fall Seminar is shaping up to be one of the great ones, with Cecil Holmes providing practical field experience to help photographers move beyond snapshots to tell deeper stories.

For a fun experience, we need to jump on board the Inspiration Challenge for 26/27. No judging, critiquing, just good, old-fashioned fun snapping away and sharing with your colleagues.

The creation of a new member portal to the website is underway which will allow us to share information that affects only the members and not the world wide web. And you've hopefully seen the NAPA Instagram site which will get our messages out in conjunction with the Facebook account.

A new audio system has been purchased to improve the overall sound system. We also have a portable cupboard to support the Print Competition stand which by the way has a locked space to store many of our items.

In closing, I'd like to express my gratitude to the former Executive who have had such a positive impact on the club. For me personally, a special thanks to Scott Simons who has been so helpful with the transition from his presidency to mine.



This issue:

President's Message
PAGE 01

Annual Program
PAGE 02

Competition Rules
PAGE 03

A Few Loose Ends
PAGE 04

Outings
PAGE 05 & 06

Cover Photo
PAGE 07

Technique
PAGE 08 TO 10

Fall Seminar
PAGE 11 & 12



2026/2027 Annual Program

Monday, August 31, 2026 - NAPA Open House -

Monday, September 21, 2026 - Digital Competition #1

Monday, October 5, 2026 - Peter Dulis- “The Power of Story Telling” (How AI is influencing Photography)

Tuesday, October 27, 2026 - Digital Competition #2

Monday, November 2, 2026 - Paul Janosi- Nature As I See It – A Passion for Photography

Saturday, November 7, 2026 - Fall Seminar – Nature In Focus – Cecil Holmes

Thursday, November 12, 2026 - Indigenous Peoples- with Steven Wade Adams (Zoom)

Monday, November 16, 2026 - Digital Competition #3

Monday, November 23, 2026 - Print Competition #1

Monday, November 30, 2026 - You Be the Judge

Monday, December 12, 2026 - The Fine Art of Black and White Photography- with Jennifer King (Zoom)

Monday, December 14, 2026 - Potluck and Digital Competition #4 – Early start

Monday, January 11, 2027 - Preparing for the Photography Trip of a Lifetime

Thursday, January 21, 2027 - Art of the Storm -with David Mayhew (Zoom)

Monday, January 25, 2027 - Digital Competition #5

Thursday, February 4, 2027 - Creative Portraiture- with Joe Edelman (Zoom)

Monday, February 8, 2027 - Hans Voorberg- Still Life

Monday, February 22, 2027 - Digital Competition #6

Thursday, February 25, 2027 - The Mecca of Bird Photography, Costa Rica- with Don Mammoser (Zoom)

Monday, March 8, 2027 - Terry Macdonald- Iphoneography/Smart Phone Photography

Monday, March 15, 2026 - Print Competition #2

Monday, March 22, 2026 - Image of the Year Competition

Monday, April 5, 2027 - Eric Baloga- “My Journey into Anything Analog”

Many thanks to Karen Fulham for another outstanding roster of presentations this year.



Competition Rule Changes

There are several minor changes that have been made. Listed below are some of the highlights. The complete rules are contained in the Member Handbook linked at the bottom of this page and should be reviewed.

Projected Digital Image Competition

There will now be a separate Monochrome Digital Division, in addition to the Colour Digital Division.

- Each member may enter two (2) images per month in each division.
- We will continue to hold six digital competitions per season.

Entries must be emailed to the Digital Chair, Katie Heykoop, at digital@niagaraphoto.org two weeks before the competition. This allows sufficient time to organize the entries and submit them to the Competition Judge one week before the competition. For example, for the September 21st competition, images must be in by September 7th.

Print Competitions

Print competitions will be held twice each season, in November and February, on separate evenings from the digital competitions.

Each member may enter up to six (6) prints per competition in the Monochrome Division and/or up to six (6) prints per competition in the Colour Division.

For every print entered, a corresponding digital image must also be submitted electronically to the Print Chair, Susan Dayboll, at sdayboll@NiagaraPhoto.org before the competition.

Members Handbook

For the complete competition rules, guidelines and other interesting information, please click the link to get your copy of the [Members Handbook](#).

Scoring Guidelines for Judges and Competitors

These are the scoring guidelines that provide judges with a little guidance to try and help keep them more consistent from month to month, while at the same time giving our members an idea of why an image may have scored what it did. The guidelines show a scoring range of 9 to 15 and explain why the image receives the score.

- 9 - Below Average. The image shows significant faults in composition and technique
- 10 - Average, undistinguished; unmemorable. Shows minor faults. Lots of room for improvement in composition, interpretation, etc.
- 11 - Good. Competent: technically satisfactory, but lacking in impact, interest, strength of composition, etc.
- 12 - Very good but falls short of an excellent rating.
- 13 - Excellent. Demonstrates photography mastery, a memorable picture.
- 14 - Outstanding; dramatic; beautiful; technically superb; very strong impact
- 15 - Unique; outstanding; stunning; flawless

Open House

Monday, August 31, 2026 at 7:00 pm

Our first meeting of the year is a special event welcoming both new and returning members- a social evening with learning opportunities. Our resident experts will answer your burning questions on photo editing, camera gear, portrait lighting, printing, and more. See all that our club has to offer for the 26-27 season. There will also be an opportunity to sell, swap or give away any photography equipment that you want to unload. Bring your camera, bring your questions!



NAPA

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Explore More
Learn More
Do More
Focus More

Time to Renew!

RENEW TODAY
@
www.NiagaraPhoto.org/Membership
A place to learn



**Saturday, September 12, 2025 - 19:00
to 20:00**

The volunteers at the Niagara Railway Museum (NRM) have invited our Photo Club to attend their Annual Rail Days event.

This is a unique after-dark photography opportunity, featuring steam locomotives and other railway equipment displayed outdoors with dramatic lighting and steam. One of the locomotives will also be open for photographers to capture images inside the cab.

We have been specifically invited as a group, and the museum would love for members to share their photographs with them for use on the NRM website, Facebook page, and social media as part of their public-relations efforts.

This is a drop-in event. When you arrive, please identify yourself as a NAPA member, which should provide you with the best access for photography. Museum Contact: Ken Jones

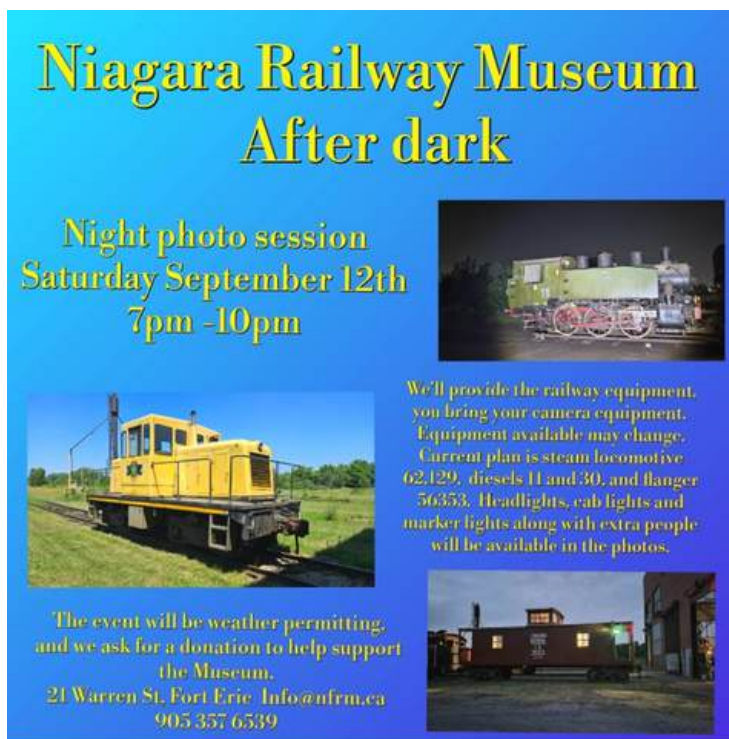
Donations are welcome but are not mandatory for the open-house events.

The Niagara Railway Museum is a completely volunteer-run organization that relies on donations and the support of its members to preserve and share Niagara's railway history. Your participation and support are greatly appreciated.

To attend, please click this link to the [Calendar](#). Then open the outing on September 12. You will be asked to log in. Use your email address and the password that was sent to you in the August 24th email, with the subject "NAPA: Important - Member Portal Password," and click [Register to Attend](#)

All of the Outings for the year are detailed on the website calendar. This makes it easy to plan your photo opportunities.

[Click here to go to the Calendar](#)



Niagara Railway Museum
After dark

Night photo session
Saturday September 12th
7pm -10pm

We'll provide the railway equipment, you bring your camera equipment. Equipment available may change. Current plan is steam locomotive 62129, diesels 11 and 30, and flanger 56353. Headlights, cab lights and marker lights along with extra people will be available in the photos.

The event will be weather permitting, and we ask for a donation to help support the Museum.
21 Warren St, Fort Erie Info@nrm.ca
905 357 6539

The poster features three photographs: a steam locomotive at night, a yellow diesel locomotive during the day, and a red passenger car at night.



HARVEST MOON OVER BUFFALO CITYSCAPE - NIAGARA PARKWAY, FORT ERIE

Saturday, September 26, 2026 - 18:00 to 20:00

Rain date: Sunday, September 27, 2026

The evening begins with dinner at 6:00 p.m. at The Barrel Restaurant. After dinner, we will make our way to the first parking lot south of Mather Circle at 108 Lakeshore Rd in Fort Erie.

We will start by taking images of the Buffalo cityscape and the Peace Bridge in the evening light and then watch as the Harvest Moon/Corn Moon rises behind the Buffalo cityscape.

To attend, please click this link to the [Calendar](#). Then open the outing on September 27. You will be asked to log in. Use your email address and the password that was sent to you in the August 24th email, with the subject "NAPA: Important - Member Portal Password," and click [Register to Attend](#)



**The Barrel Restaurant - (905) 871-1167
224 Garrison Rd, Fort Erie, Ont.**

[Menu](#)

Early Morning Isle of Skye by Terry Rotella



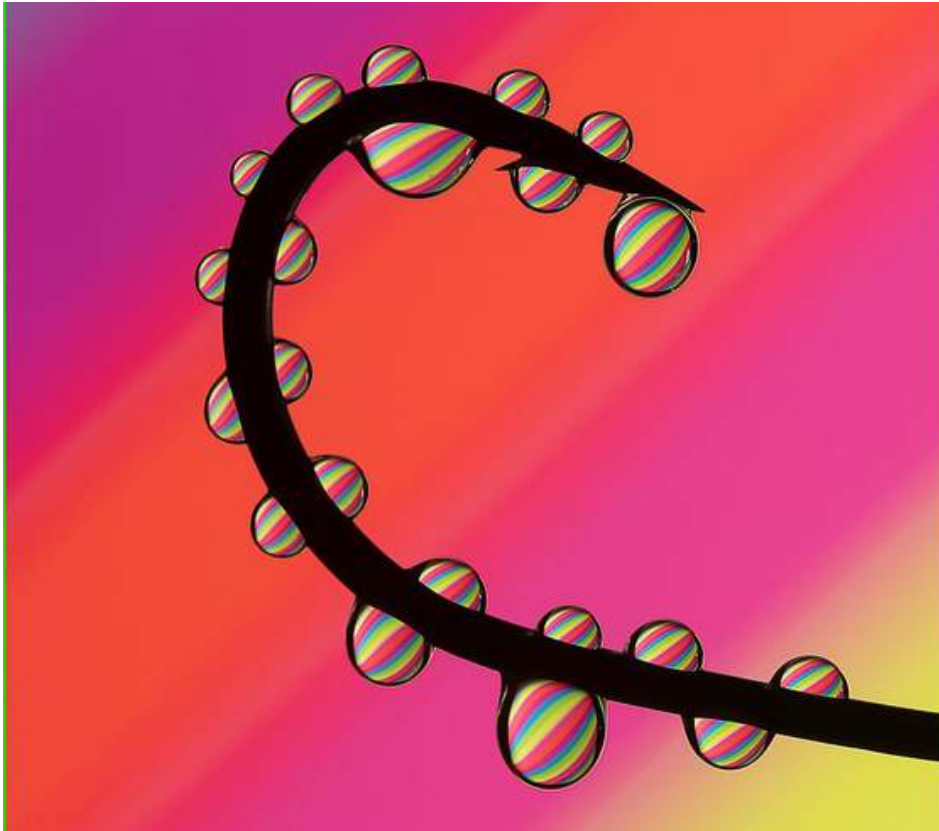
When I travelled to Scotland in June of 2024, doing a sunrise shoot in the otherworldly Quiraing on the Isle of Skye was at the top of my bucket list. I discovered that shooting at sunrise on Skye is not for the faint of heart. First of all, sunrise is ridiculously early compared to here. We were up at 3:00 in order to drive and then hike to the location in time. Secondly, it was quite cold. Finally, and most depressing of all, Scotland is very cloudy. There's no guarantee you're going to see anything that even remotely resembles the golden hour.

The Quiraing is a unique area of Skye that features high cliffs, plateaus, pinnacles and some serious uphill hiking. I was amazed by the almost mythological landscape I was seeing around me; I felt like I had landed in Middle Earth. Heavy clouds loomed overhead. The photography gods seemed intent on keeping the sun to themselves. Finally, however, after about half an hour of solid grey, the clouds parted briefly, spilling beautiful shafts of light across the landscape. I knew I didn't have long, so I just kept snapping until the clouds closed up again. This is probably my favourite shot from that morning. I like the shafts of light coming down from the clouds, the light on the water, the beautiful sunlit green of the hillside, and that winding road that we had driven in on. Most of all, I like the memories it brings back.

Terry Rotella

Inspirational Challenge

THE INSPIRATIONAL CHALLENGE IS BACK TO INSPIRE YOU TO TRY SOMETHING YOU HAVEN'T DONE BEFORE AND HAVE A LITTLE FUN.
[Click here for the Challenge.](#)



Editor's Note: When Scott was revealing these wonderful images in competitions at the club, I asked him if he would do a little write-up and share his technique. I'm sad to say that it took me 18 months to get it published. Better late than never,

Born Out of Boredom, Stress and Creativity.

Whenever this series of images appears in competitions etc. I get a lot of questions. Besides how did I do it, I inevitably get “what are you using for a background”?

Occasionally, I spend time at the dollar store, especially the craft and school supply aisle. This particular one came from a pad of crafting paper that had 4 or 5 different designs of pages in it. This happens to be a target pattern, but there were straight lines, polka dots and wavy lines also. I purchased this before the pandemic with the thought that I would use it to photograph water drops on glass refracting the patterns of the paper below it. Well, that never happened.

Beauty from Boredom Con't

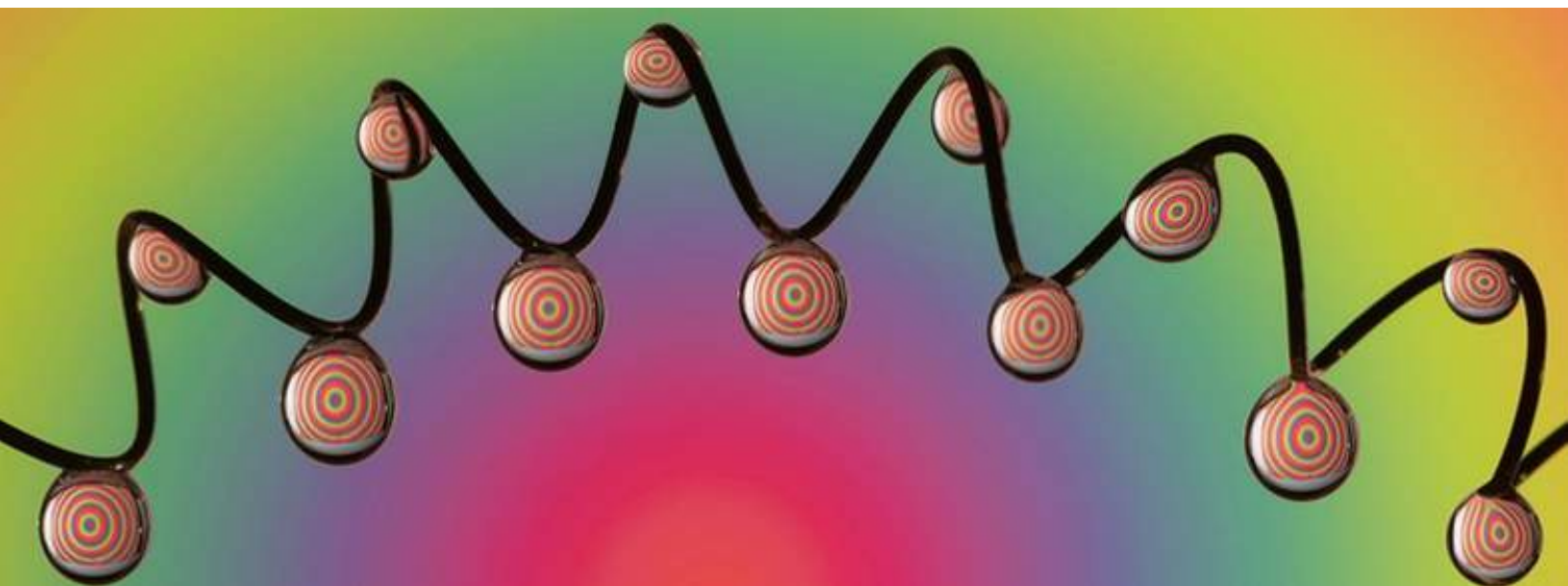
There are 3 other important pieces to the shot.

While getting a flu shot in 2019, I asked the doctor if I could have the needle afterwards..... of course, he asked why. At that time, I was looking to put water drops on flowers in very specific spots while shooting them in my basement shooting space. He gave me 2 sizes of clean needles.

Also in 2019, NAPA, then the Niagara Falls Camera Club, hosted the NFRCC Fall Seminar with Don Komarechka - that's right, the snowflake guy. His Sunday workshop included getting a set of "3rd Hand" tabletop clamp sets. It helps you hold things in place for different hobbies. Then the pandemic hit, and everyone was stuck at home with lots of spare time on their hands. I spent a lot of time in the basement creating/playing and staying out of the way.

One of my other hobbies is fishing. A hobby that accumulates as much gear as photography. I started out shooting water drops on pen springs. When that got boring, I looked around the basement and thought a fishing hook might look cool,,,,, and it did.

I held it in the clamp and added the water drops with the needle. I supported the craft paper on a makeshift stand and shot it,



Beauty from Boredom Con't

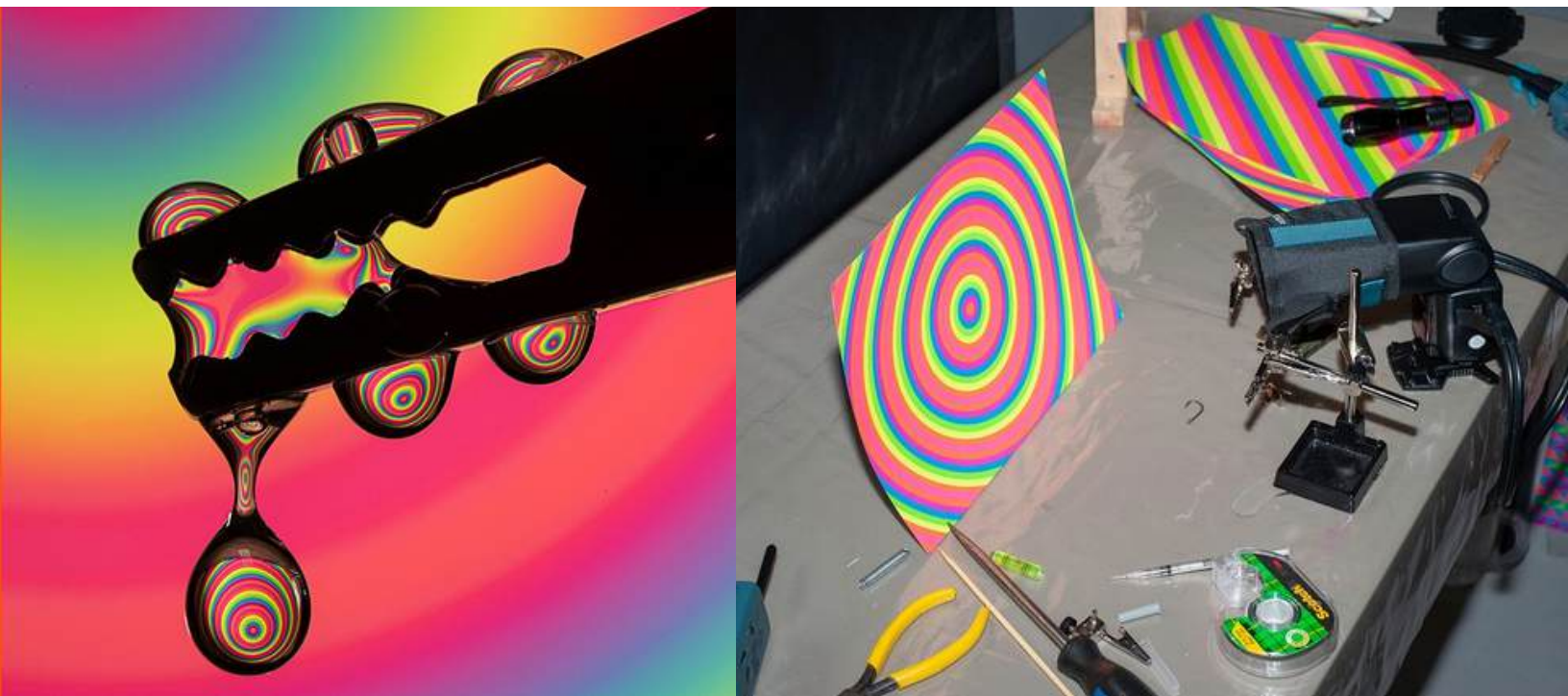
I soon found out that any lights on in the room would reflect and refract in the drops, so lights off. I also wanted the hook to be in complete silhouette, so the light had to be behind it and to the side so it wouldn't be in the shot.

I also realized that the light would be bouncing all over the room, so I put a snoot on my flash to keep any stray light from scattering. A snoot is a tube that goes over the end of the flash, it can be bought or homemade from just about anything. Paper towel tubes slit and taped together work well as does aluminum foil etc.

The image of the alligator clip with the drop falling is lit the same way. For the setup, I had the needle mostly hidden and slowly adding water until it dripped. Any needle that you could see was removed in post.

The rest came down to minor tweaking and trying not to bump the table. The images turned out better than I could have anticipated and as a bonus, they have done well in competitions.

They were definitely borne out of boredom, stress and creativity.



NATURE IN FOCUS - NOVEMBER 7TH, 2026
OUTDOOR AND NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY SEMINAR
WITH CECIL HOLMES, TAMRON AMBASSADOR



Nature in Focus is a multi-session, one-day photography seminar focused on creating meaningful outdoor, wildlife, bird, and macro images through patience, observation, and intentional technique. Led by professional photographer Cecil Holmes (<https://www.cecilsphotos.com/>), this seminar blends artistic vision with practical field experience to help photographers move beyond snapshots and toward images that tell deeper stories.

Grounded in real-world shooting rather than trends or accolades, these sessions explore how light, composition, behaviour, and timing come together in nature photography. From sweeping landscapes and cascading waterfalls to birds in flight and the intricate details of the macro world, attendees will gain insight into how to see more clearly and photograph with purpose.

This seminar is ideal for photographers who want to slow down, refine their craft, and develop images that reflect a stronger connection to the natural world.

2026 Fall Seminar - Con't

Cecil will present 4 separate programs discussing the following topics:

- Earth & Flow: Where Landscape and Waterfalls Come Alive
- Call of the Wild: Photographing Animals in Their World
- Inflight and at Rest: The Beauty of Birds in Motion and Stillness
- Small Subjects, Big Stories: Exploring the Hidden Details of Macro Photography

See the [website](https://niagaraphoto.org/fall-seminar/) for more details about the presentation.

Tickets for the Fall Seminar, including lunch and refreshments, are \$70 and can be purchased at <https://niagaraphoto.org/fall-seminar/>.

As a member of the Niagara Association of Photographic Art, we are pleased to provide you with a discount code for \$10 off your ticket price. We sent it to you by email on June 13, 2026, with the subject: **“NAPA: Fall Seminar, Tickets, Outings and History.”** If you have misplaced it, contact dreilly@niagaraphoto.org.

