



## Capturing the Magic of the Marsh

By: AJ Groen

The Second Marsh and the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve provide a target rich environment for photographers like me. Their location within City of Oshawa also provides easy access. The ever-changing shore of Lake Ontario and the lake itself compliment the two areas perfectly. I am grateful to Jim Richards and George Peapples (President of GM Canada) who were instrumental in preserving these amazing spaces for everyone to enjoy. My photography portfolio contains many images that were captured at these locations.

At a time where video is on every medium, I enjoy making still images. The beauty of a still image is that one can study a moment in time. When framed on the wall, that image, and moment, can be explored often.

My favorite times to visit the Marsh are early mornings, or towards the end of the day. I refer to this as the time of the long light. Rain works for me as well. To see our earth mother soaking in the rain is always special. Since the trails can get quite wet, wearing rubber boots is a good idea.

As a former professional photographer, I have a variety of cameras to choose from. There are three cameras that I use during my walks. One is an all-weather camera which is small, has a wonderful macro mode, and works under water.

The second is referred to as a bridge camera, which has a fixed lens with a focal length range that goes from wide angle to a powerful telephoto lens. Its one-inch square sensor can produce beautiful images. The nice thing about fixed lenses is that the camera sensor never gets dirty.

The third camera is my cell phone. Its inherently highly processed images do some things better than my other cameras. I have downloaded an App called Snapseed which does a good job of post processing images. Snapseed also has a high-definition mode which brings out the clouds beautifully.

These three cameras all work very well and are not heavy. This is a bonus, particularly on longer walks. Full frame cameras are heavy and can be a burden.

Mono pods and tripods can be of great benefit. Be sure to turn your vibration reduction system off or your images will be blurred. My walking stick serves as a monopod.

When using a single lens reflex (SLR) camera, carry the camera in your left hand, while tucking the left elbow into your side. This helps provide a stable platform. Operate the camera controls and release the shutter with your right.

Many automatic cameras have an exposure compensation dial. This can be used to adjust your exposure in high-contrast situations.

In my experience, making images is only part of the process. Very few images do not benefit from post processing. There are many programs available for that purpose some. I use Photoshop, which is costly and the industry standard, but there are other programs that are cheaper while others are free. My advice is don't overlook this step.

A wonderful thing about photography is the further one engages the process, the more one sees the beauty not only in nature, but everywhere else. It is a gift that keeps giving.