

# Cayuga Nature Photographers *Newsletter*

June 2019 - Volume XXVII, No. 6

## Spring Wildflowers

There is a lot of news to share. First, our next sharing theme is, yes, spring wildflowers. There is a lot to feast on right now as suggested by this recent photo of Virginia Bluebells in the Mundy Wildflower Garden. You have until July 11 to prepare your own special images. Our meeting on June 6 will be presented by **Devan Acardo**, so we will delay our sharing of wildflower images for a month. Devan will offer a basic introduction to building your own website, and then share with us highlights of her recent trip to Hawaii. It will be great meeting. Looking ahead to the July calendar, note our usual first Thursday meeting date lands on July 4<sup>th</sup>. As a result, we will meet a week later to share our wildflower images. Please make a note on your calendar.



At our May meeting, **Devan Acardo** was elected to fill the vacant CNP Vice President for Programs. Thanks, Devan!

In other news, our webmaster, **Mike Goldstein**, is asking members to update him on personal websites for the CNP webpage, and also any exhibits upcoming.

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**Thursday, June 6 at 7:30 PM**  
**Cornell Plant Science Building,**  
**Whetzel Seminar Room (Rm.404)**

## Backlighting & Silhouettes

**Devan Acardo** started us off with beautiful warm scene from Kruger National Park in South Africa.



There is a lot to like in this image. There are an odd number of birds in silhouette. While the tree is centered, it is not static for several reasons. The birds are facing in differing directions. The sun is off to the side. The tree branches add to creating viewer eye movement. The subtle wisp of clouds frames both upper and lower regions, and the tree tops to the left create a link to the ground. The sky color is harmonious. It all fits together to capture what Devan was undoubtedly feeling.

**Kathleen Rasmussen** next shared a garden image from a garden in the Cornell Arboretum. It is *Clematis recta*.



What is she telling us about the plant? Three traits are immediately seen - form, color and texture. The form is captured in silhouette, color through the backlighting on thin leaves and texture in the backlit hairs. The background gives a hint that it is not an isolated plant. The viewer doesn't need the dark areas described to capture Kathleen's message. Well done.

**Mark Malkin** went back to his film days for a backlit pink flower with a fly perched on the top of a petal.



The double exposure creates a pleasing effect, as do the red-violet and the blue-green hues. Is the fly central to the overall effect? Hold something over the fly to remove it temporarily. Isn't it less appealing?

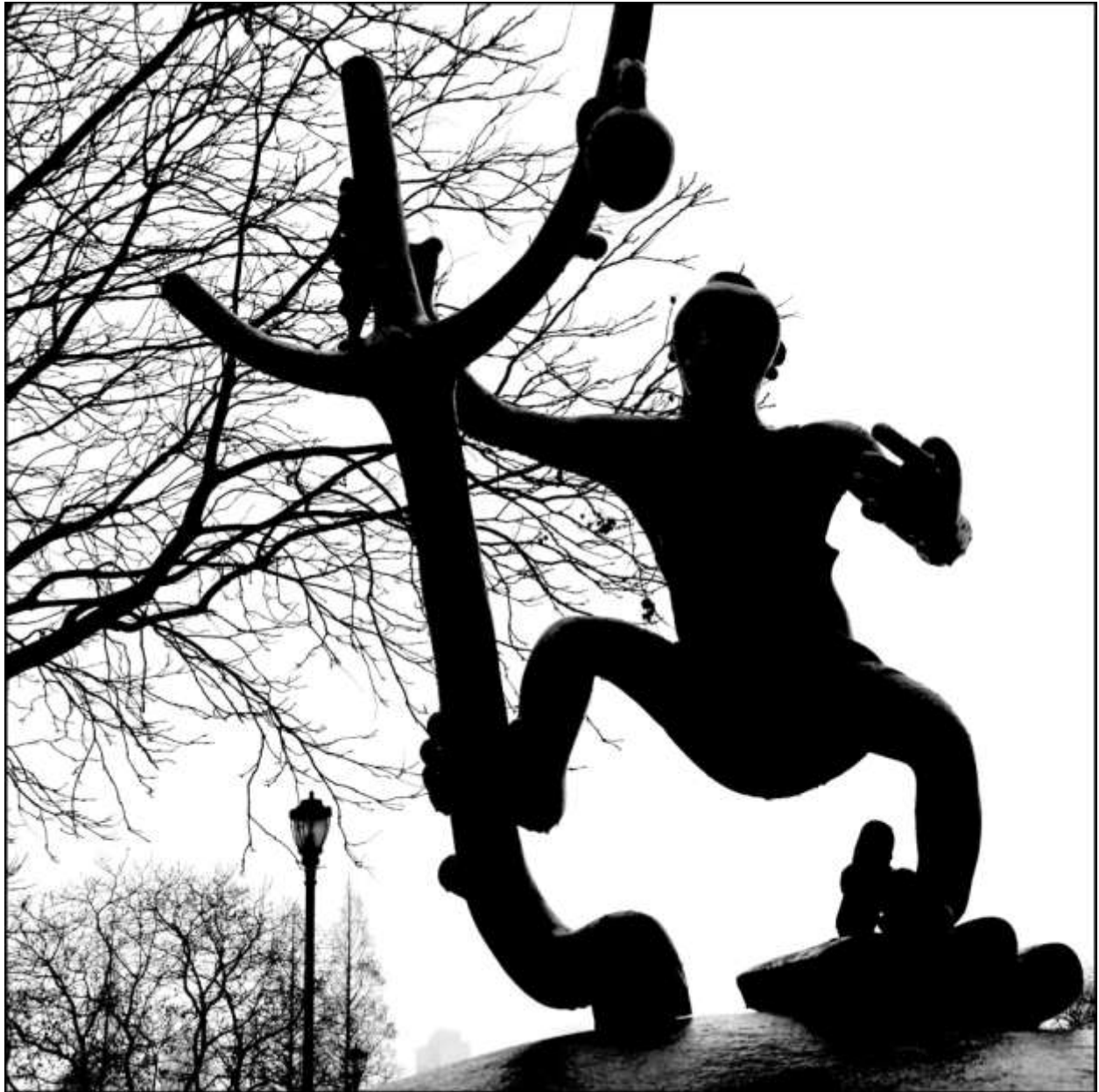
**Muhammad Arif** captured the flight of a lone Great Blue Heron silhouetted in the evening sky as it, presumably, returns to its night roost. (It seems to be the same sky Devan found in Africa.)



What are the keys to this photo's success in telling a story? The uniform orange sky suggests a calm summer evening, and also the solitary flight of the heron. Muhammad was wise to select the image timed correctly with the wings raised above the body. Also, it was his good fortune to be located so the distant wing was not hidden by the closer wing. These little details are important.



**Eugene Kolomatsky** found an intriguing outdoor sculpture . It appears to be a monkey climbing a mysterious object. He wisely converted to black and white so it becomes about the forms without distracting colors, or possibly a dull sky.



The square format is ideal, and the background formed of trees and a street light, plus a very distant hazy building, suggest a city park. Nice.

**Paul Schmitt** found something similar to Eugene's silhouette but not very lighthearted. Standing out on the rock promontory of Little Round Top in the Gettysburg National Military Park is the statue of Union General Gouverneur Kimble Warren, the hero of the defense of Little Round Top. His statue looks out over the bloody battlefield where he directed the Union Army defense which prevented Hood's army from breaking through the Union's flank.



The choice of black and white seemed appropriate for the historical context.

**Connie Stirling-Engman** shared a backlit image of an Asian Skunk Cabbage found in the Cornell Arboretum. This is an elegant plant that offers a nicer display than the native Skunk Cabbage.



Backlight is ideal to capture the lovely yellow spathe with the spadix standing within. In this case, setting the plant off to the side suggests the overall setting.



**Lisa Stankus** missed the meeting, but wished to share. (This is always welcomed. Editor)



One immediately recognizes the profile of the Wild Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*) which is widely seen in local waste lands, and is a favorite autumn food for Goldfinches. There is good composition- a group of threes with just enough separation between each seed head. The edge glow is a key detail in making this a successful image.

Thanks to those who shared their images at the meeting and also for the newsletter. There are recurring concepts found in the set of images. Subjects kept uncluttered, and often in odd numbers, are seen often. Silhouettes emphasize forms. Most of all, it seems each image was backed by a clear understanding of why the photo was made.

# The Art of Subtraction



I love Giant Solomon Seal, such that I have two large beds of it surrounded by fencing to save it from the deer. But the image at left does not tell the viewer why. (It might work if my message is why I love Mundy Wildflower Garden, but poorly so.) I got carried away in this photo,, and it says very little. The yellow is just distracting. Recall how many images in our review of May's meeting were so clear in the message of why.

So, let's approach Giant Solomon Seal by paying more attention to the why I love the plant.

I love the graceful arch of the stem with the leaves flowing up.

I love the clusters of tiny white blooms with a fringe of yellow leading into green.

I love the rich greens in stem and leaves.

Now I see that my much earlier photo did not speak of this love. I needed to subtract .

I needed to share only what attracts me.

I needed to think like a sculpture facing a block of wood and carving out a bear, with the wood grain showing textures representing the bear's fur.

*Paul Schmitt*



## Please Note

*Membership is \$20 for new and existing members. For existing members it is due in September. You may pay at our next meeting, or, if preferred, you can mail it to Nancy Ridenour at 346 Warren Road, Ithaca, NY 14850. Thank you.*

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