Arachnophobia: the fear of spiders and other arachnids such as scorpions....It is one of the most common specific phobias. Some statistics show that 50% of women and 10% of men show symptoms.
Wikipedia

Student Photos Up Close

In "Student Photos Up Close," we've often stressed the importance of getting in close. This is especially critical when photographing spiders, assuming you want to make those sinister legs, distended bodies and creepy webs VIVIDLY LARGE.

A prerequisite is a lens with close focusing capability. **Gabby Landflisi** (top) didn't own such a lens, so her spider is way too small. **Jackie Bruno's** (left) lens was able to get close, and she did; **Kelly Woods** (right) got closer still. *The closer, the better!*

Bringing your camera within a few inches of a spider poses two potential problems. First, your camera may cast a shadow on the spider. Second, you might scare it away. In order to keep your distance, it's best to work with a telephoto lens, 100mm at a minimum. Macro lenses are specifically made for close focusing, but many non-macros can focus close enough. If your tele doesn't—just because a lens says "macro" doesn't guarantee you can get really close—then use an *extension tube* (or two), modestly priced glassless tubes that fit between lens and camera body. Alternatively, you can use a screw-on magnifying filter on the front of your lens.

The closer you get, the more difficult it is to maintain focus. Focus was especially challenging in this case because the wind was moving the spider back and forth; it's web was like a trampoline. No surprise that Kelly's shot isn't sharp. A moving subject obviously can cause motion blur; also, the lens may not adjust to the fast-changing subject-to-lens distance. A few tips to help deal with these problems:

1. Use a smaller f.stop to expand your depth of field; you have some focusing latitude as the spider moves.

2. Using a smaller f.stop (which is good), mandates a slower shutter speed (which is bad if the subject is moving). For both a fast shutter speed <u>and</u> a small f.stop, use a higher ISO than you normally wood in this light. So what's the ideal shutter speed for spider-in-the-wind pictures? That depends on how much wind there is and how close you are.

3. Use continuous/servo (focusing) mode which will continuously refocus as the spider moves. If you're not comfortable in servo, then pre-focus on a spot and shoot instantly when the wind moves the spider to that pre-focused spot.

4. Use a tripod. You can't eliminate wind, but you can eliminate camera movement.

5. Take plenty of shots (assuming the spider stays put). Magnify the image in your LCD periodically, carefully checking sharpness of key spider body parts; this generally will reveal any significant lack of sharpness.

Now find yourself a really ugly spider, follow these tips, and provoke some arachnophobia.

A Touch of Flash Adds Beautiful Sparkle

Flash serves two primary purposes: it can be the main light source or it can provide fill light for shadow areas. But another use for flash, not often discussed, is to create a catch light, that little white spot you see in a person's or animal's eyes that can make the eyes come alive. But catch lights aren't only for eyes, they're great for adding sparkle to water. Here are two virtually identical shots (by Horizon Director **Steve Gottlieb**), except the lower used flash, which created all those perky catch lights in the drops. And if you look very closely, you'll also see that tiny water rivulets become more alive. The flash also give colors just a touch of extra sheen and vividness.

This was done with the camera's pop-up flash, set on —2 stops compensation so the flash wouldn't overwhelm the soft ambient light.

Here's a suggestion: after *every* shot taken without flash, then take one with (pop-up or hot shoe) set on from —2 to —3 stops. Then compare. You might find this improves many shots and rarely causes significant negative impact. (Don't do this if you want your shutter speed to be *above* the maximum flash synch speed—1/200 or 1/250—since the flash will cause your camera to default to the synch speed.

The Summit is Coming, The Summit is Coming

The Horizon Photography Summit comes to Wilmington on Feb 23-24. A few highlights:

> **Lou Jones**: This Nikon Legend Behind the Lens has been Everywhere and shot Everything.

> **Max MacKensie**: As good as it gets for architecture, plus Max takes you aboard his ultralight for oh-ah aerials.

> **Jon Naar**: Have you ever been up-close to photographic living history? Here's your chance.

> **Skip Brown**: His camera's his companion when he sky dives, surfboards or kayaks over waterfalls. Yikes!

> **Joe Edelman**: Grand master of Glamour. Hear how he does it...and shoot a model while he coaches you.

> Lots more classes on photo techniques, photo history and much more...plus portfolio reviews.

> View the **Wilmington International**, one of the finest photo exhibitions in the country.

> Hang out with instructors and fellow photo enthusiasts in an friendly, casual setting.

EARLY REGISTRATION DISCOUNT ENDS JAN. 15 !!

www.horizonworkshops.com/summit

"FLUSH": A Book Idea Whose Time Has Come?

   Have you been following Horizon Director **Steve Gottlieb** on the **Horizon Workshop Blog**? For some months, Steve's been posting photos and captions for his proposed book, **"FLUSH: Images and Musings About Bathrooms through the Ages"**? Now more than halfway done, Steve decided it was time to seek out a publisher. His book proposal letter is at: http://www.horizonworkshops.com/gottliebphotoblog/. Finding a publisher is almost always a huge challenge that can take years. While Steve's at work adding to his FLUSH "potty portfolio," let him know of any location or other ideas you might have. (In case you're wondering why Steve doesn't use one of his previous publishers, the answer is simple: his first publisher is defunct, while the second, third and fourth don't do this kind of quirky gift book.)

Upcoming Workshops

In Chesapeake City Unless Otherwise Indicated

Jan. 19: From Click to Print

Jan. 20: Photoshop Elements

Jan. 26: Adobe Lightroom

Feb. 23-24: Horizon Summit (Wilmington, DE)

Apr. 20-21: Washington DC: Icons with a Creative Eye

Apr. 27: The Creative i: Shooting with the iPhone

Apr. 29 - May 5: 2013 California Dreaming (So. California & Las Vegas)

May 3-5: Chesapeake City thru National Geographic Eyes

May 4: Central Park in Season

May 11: The Spirit of Manhattan

May 25-27: Creative Vision (3 Day)

June 22-23: Canon Experience

END FRAME

It's a special delight when a student finds an everyday object that few pay attention to and creates a fine photo. At a recent workshop for the **Coastal Camera Club** in Lewes, DE, **Dick Snyder** hit pay dirt by looking up at the restaurant ceiling; he chose a shutter speed that created a tasty amount of blur. Lovely off-center composition, too.