

Coastal Camera Club Assigned Topics

Creating the topics this year I felt the need to also provide opportunities to learn, develop skills, and add new directions to our photographic experience. Our first topic of Leading lines can be a powerful exercise in composition. Next Winged Insects let us explore a subject that may require new skills. Chairs and Benches assignment gives an opportunity to go out and shoot for a specific subject and will reduce the “What do I shoot?” feeling and helps us by limiting our scope. When we get to the Multi-Image assignment we all may well have the foundations of a three-image story directly from our first assignments.

So, get out and shoot, digital film is cheap!

I have utilized ChatGPT to assist us with each monthly assignment. Every assignment will have a resource document on the website. You will find that ChatGPT did an amazing job of providing advice and assistance with each assignment. Please consider the articles as a resource for the assignment and into the future as a resource.

The assignment articles provide the entire club with a new resource to explore photography. The assignments and articles can be found on the Coastal Camera Club website under Competition and on the Competition website under Assistance.

Enjoy!

Paul Sylvia

Why We Have Monthly Assignments

One of the greatest benefits of belonging to a camera club is the opportunity to challenge ourselves with subjects we might never choose on our own. At first glance, a monthly assignment may seem like simply another competition category. In reality, it is much more than that—it is an opportunity to grow as a photographer.

When we photograph only our favorite subjects, it's easy to become comfortable. We develop familiar routines, visit the same locations, and create images that, while enjoyable, may not expand our skills. Monthly assignments encourage us to step outside those routines and approach photography with fresh eyes.

Each assignment is designed to emphasize a different aspect of photographic development. One month may strengthen our understanding of composition by asking us to use **leading lines** to guide the viewer through an image. Another may encourage patience and observation while photographing **winged insects**, teaching us to understand behavior, lighting, and timing. An assignment centered on **chairs and benches** reminds us that compelling photographs are not dependent on extraordinary subjects, but on our

ability to see ordinary subjects in extraordinary ways. Creating a **multi-image story** challenges us to think beyond individual photographs and consider sequencing, visual relationships, and storytelling.

Perhaps the greatest value of assignments is that they encourage us to photograph with intention. Rather than wandering with a camera hoping to find something interesting, we begin looking for opportunities that fit a creative objective. We become more observant, more thoughtful in our compositions, and more deliberate in our choices of light, perspective, timing, and presentation.

Assignments also inspire exploration. They encourage us to visit new places, experiment with unfamiliar techniques, try different lenses, photograph at different times of day, and occasionally venture outside our comfort zone. Even if the final image is never entered into competition, the experience often teaches us something valuable that carries into every future photograph.

Finally, remember that success isn't measured solely by ribbons or scores. Sometimes the greatest achievement is discovering a new way of seeing or learning a technique that changes how you approach photography. Every assignment is an invitation to experiment, to observe more carefully, and to become a stronger visual storyteller.

As the year unfolds, we hope you'll embrace each monthly challenge—not simply as a competition theme, but as an opportunity to learn, create, and enjoy the journey of photographic growth.

Happy shooting!

Developed with assistance from ChatGPT