

People in Nature: Conservation Photojournalism

Aug 21 – Aug 27, 2011

Tuition: \$1150

Working with environmental organizations to envision and produce meaningful projects.



Bridget Besaw

Photographers need stories to tell. Environmental organizations have stories that need telling. Together they can create powerful imagery that reminds the viewer of the importance of protecting the planet. This workshop is for photographers with a strong interest in environmental issues and a desire to develop stories that reveal the human connection to nature and the planet's natural resources.

Students work directly with communications staff at either The Nature Conservancy, Maine Coast Heritage Trust or Coastal Mountains Land Trust to develop their story and to photograph it during the week. Each of these organizations has several great conservation projects happening in the Midcoast region, and have offered to work with our students to envision the photography and then to help them gain access to these sites throughout the week. A portion of each day is spent working with the organization to create a body of work that sharpens photographic skills within the context of an environmental story. Students work with Bridget and Melissa each day to evaluate their experiences working with the organization, and to guide their photographic coverage.

Daily discussions encompass all aspects of the process, from finding the right story and matching it with an organization to developing a relationship and pitching an idea to the organization. Participants discover not only how to work within the confines of an NGO's needs to expand creative limits but also how to help NGO's see the project to fruition as an effective outreach tool. The end result is imagery that participants can be proud of on a multitude of levels.

Students are required to work digitally

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instructor

Bridget Besaw tells the story of the human connection to the natural world. The primary inspiration for her work is environmental protection. During her years as a newspaper and magazine photographer Bridget won numerous national press awards for stories on the depletion of natural resources. Among publications Bridget created feature stories for: Newsweek, Forbes, Fortune, Business Week, Smithsonian, National Geographic Adventure and Nature Conservancy Magazine.



Photo By: Willa Kammerer

Bridget's passion for these stories led to her niche in producing imagery for multimedia, exhibits and books as outreach tools for environmental organizations. Bridget has now published two books in partnership with environmental organizations: *Wildness Within*, *Wildness Without* and *From the Land*. Bridget's projects have tackled issues such as development threats to northern Maine's wilderness, loss of working farmland in New England, restoration of crucial salmon habitat in the North Pacific, threats to wild rivers and arid grasslands in South America, climate change research and prevention in Indonesian forests and sustainable fisheries initiatives throughout the world. Among the organizations who have partnered with her to create photography projects: Maine Farmland Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Patagonia, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Chewonki Foundation, The Kittredge Foundation and The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Bridget's work is supported by Leica Camera Company and is represented by Aurora Pictures. Website: <http://www.bridgetbesaw.com/>

Melissa Ryan is Associate Director - Visuals for the Nature Conservancy's award winning magazine, *Nature Conservancy*. Melissa oversees & implements the photographic and design vision for the quarterly magazine's print, online and digital versions. Melissa works in close partnership with photographers to create & publish dynamic environmental conservation stories that reveal the connections between global natural resource use, scientific research, and the beauty and wonder of the natural world. Recent photography projects include: Florida's Northern Everglades, Pohnpei's marine protected areas, endangered lynx research in Montana, climate change & cattle ranching in Utah, and salmon conservation throughout the Pacific Northwest. Melissa has over 20 years of photo editing experience working on magazines, books, newspapers, and online projects. Prior to working at the Conservancy, she worked for National Geographic Books and edited 16 books on a wide range of subjects including natural history, travel, science, and culture. She began her career with a photojournalism degree from the University of Texas-Austin. *Nature Conservancy* magazine is the flagship publication of The Nature Conservancy, the leading conservation organization working worldwide to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. <http://magazine.nature.org>