

CONSERVATION PHOTOGRAPHY

FIELD COURSE

June 11-17, 2017 Cocobolo Nature Reserve, Panama





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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This unique photographic experience will take place at CREA's Cocobolo Nature Reserve's biological field station, a breathtaking campus located in the heart of Panama's lush rainforest corridor. Instructors will include some of the leading voices in the field of conservation photography, along with tropical biologists, and expert field guides. Participants will learn how to improve their photographic skills in the field, tell conservation and natural history stories suitable for print or digital media, and document the human side of the conservation narrative.



As environmental issues deepen and public concerns broaden, scientists and other conservationists are working to tell the nature's story—both from a conservation and natural history perspective—in new and engaging ways so that citizens of the world may feel moved to speak up for its protection. For more than a century, photography has been one of the most powerful ways to shed light on species and places in need of protection. This course has been designed to empower more people to use their own images to tell the conservation stories that matter most to them. This one week course will guide participants in new ways to emphasize the conservation context of their subjects and offer new skills for documenting the natural world through photography.

THE SETTING:

Panama is exceptionally rich in biodiversity, thanks in large part to its tropical climate and location. This small Central American nation bridges the gap between two great continents whose flora and fauna evolved on different trajectories until geological forces pulled them together about 3 million years ago. The result is a lush landscape slightly smaller than the state of South Carolina, harboring as many species of bird as the US and Canada combined, ten times as many tree species, and multitudes of reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects and flowering plants, many of which remain to be discovered.

Cocobolo Nature Reserve is located at the narrowest stretch of Mesoamerica with only 40 miles separating the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean, representing a vital yet fragile piece of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. It covers over 1,100 acres of primary and secondary lowland rainforest and harbors endangered wildlife such as ocelots, margays, great curassows and harlequin toads to name but a few. The reserve facility consists of sleeping huts, a large kitchen,



bathrooms, and a large indigenous "open style" classroom and communal room. Solar panels, composting toilets, triple filtered river water and organic produce from our demonstration farm showcase CREA's commitment to sustainable living.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

It is anticipated that by the end of the program students will:

- Learn how to effectively evaluate and respond to a photographic opportunity in the field
- Increase understanding of photographing various types of plant and animal life, and people in the field
- Use a variety of different photographic techniques to document biodiversity and story elements
- Develop a narrative with images that cover the most important elements of a story
- Have a basic understanding of how to pitch a story to editors and various media buyers

EXPERIENCES INCLUDE:

- Five full-day stay at the Cocobolo Nature Reserve's biological field station
- Day and night hikes to discover and document a broad array of wildlife
- Hands-on photographic demonstration and experimentation
- Evening lectures and slideshows
- Image review and discussion

COST AND PAYMENT POLICY:

- The cost of this course is \$1800 (\$1400.00 for students with a valid ID) and includes:
 - ✦ All transport for pick and drop off from Panama City airport
 - ✦ All transport for tours and to Cocobolo Field Station
 - ✦ All lodging during the trip
 - ✦ Three meals per day during the trip
 - ✦ Tuition
 - ✦ Use of field equipment including tent, mattress for sleeping at the reserve

IT DOES NOT INCLUDE (NOT LIMITED TO):

- Airfare to and from Panama
- Individual insurance costs
- Vaccinations and medical supplies (basic first aid is carried by guides and faculty during the trip)
- Snacks and drinks supplemental to the food and beverages supplied during the trip
- Personal equipment, electronics etc.
- Personal clothing, boots, sleeping ware (e.g. sleeping bag & pillow)

PAYMENT:


- \$500 deposit to be paid 90 days prior to course start
- Full payment to be made before 60 days before trip

CANCELLATION AND REPAYMENT:

- 100% repayment if cancelled before 90 days of course start date
- 50% deposit minus administration fee of \$100 if cancelled between 60 to 89 days before course start date
- Full refund will be made in case CREA cancels the course

Course is limited to 10 students. Those that provide full payment will secure places first.

**For more information contact:
info@crea-panama.org**



Proceeds from this course go toward supporting CREA's mission to preserve critical wildlife habitat in Panama.



REQUIRED EQUIPMENT:

- Digital camera (DSLR)
- Memory cards, card reader, image storage capacity
- Laptop and charger (Ideally including an image review / editing program such as Photoshop Elements, Adobe Lightroom, etc)

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED:

- 1 or more off-camera flash
- Soft box or other forms of diffusers
- Tripod
- Extra camera batteries
- Water resistant backpack
- Headlamp
- Flashlights
- Insect net
- Large Ziploc bags to hold specimens
- 3'x3' black velvet for backdrop
- Various clamps

EQUIPMENT QUESTIONS?:

- Contact Clay Bolt at cbnatphoto@gmail.com



Featured image and orchid bee © Clay Bolt / claybolt.com

THE INSTRUCTORS:



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Clay Bolt is a Natural History and Conservation Photographer specializing in the world's smaller creatures. He regularly partners with organizations such as the National Geographic Society, National Wildlife Federation, and Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation. He is an Associate Fellow in the International League of Conservation Photographers (iLCP), president of the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA), and co-founder (2009) of the international nature and biodiversity photography project "Meet Your Neighbours." His current major focus is on North America's native bees and the important roles that they play in our lives. Clay lives in Bozeman, Montana where he is the communications lead for WWF's Northern Great Plains Program. Visit www.claybolt.com to learn more.



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Andrew Snyder is a doctoral candidate at the University of Mississippi where he studies patterns of diversification of amphibians and reptiles in South America's Guiana Shield. He has extensive experience working in the Neotropics, having participated in 11 biodiversity field surveys to Honduras and Guyana. In addition to conducting surveys for his personal research, Andrew also participates in biodiversity assessment and monitoring expeditions with Conservation International, Global Wildlife Conservation, World Wildlife Fund-Guianas, and Operation Wallacea Ltd. Andrew is also a photographer who works to document the natural history of the organisms and environments where he conducts his research. Learn more at www.andrewmsnyder.com.

ABOUT CREA:

CREA is an IRS designated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization who supports world class ecological research at CREA-owned Cocobolo Nature Reserve, located at the transition between Central and South American ecoregions, which is an area recognized as a Global Biodiversity Hotspot. Learn more at www.crea-panama.org.

