


[Front Page](#)
[Staff](#)
[Instruction](#)
[Galleries](#)
[Forums](#)
[Portfolios](#)
[Shop](#)
[Links](#)
[Membership](#)

The Everyday Camera

Text and photography copyright © Darren Huski. All rights reserved.

Do you have a camera with you every day? Do you take a camera everywhere you go? Why not? Is it too big? Too much bulk? Your DSLR (or 4x5) not fit in your briefcase?

That used to be me too. I had a DSLR but it stayed at home on a regular day and only went with me when I was going out photographing (don't even talk about carrying the 4x5). It was too big and bulky to take with me to work all week. Even walking the dogs with a DSLR dangling around your neck was a pain in the neck. In short, despite owning a DSLR, it was only with me sometimes.

What I kept finding was there were times I did not have a camera, but I had found a potential image. I wanted to have a camera with me all the time, but there were so many times that taking a DSLR was not convenient or it was difficult to do so and it caused me to miss images.

What I wanted was a camera that I could put in a pocket, take in my briefcase, etc. I wanted something I could easily take to work or when walking the dogs in the park. It should be small but could still able to deliver a decent image, have a wide-angle lens, a fast lens, image stabilization, ability to shoot raw, and with aperture priority. It seems like a demanding list, but I found that camera and now I always have that camera with me - every day.

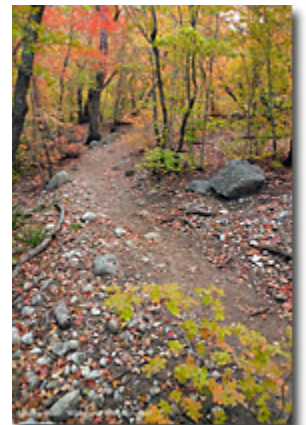
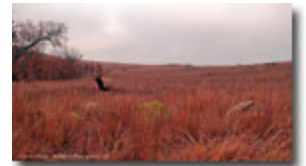
I think of it as a photographer's every day camera. Many point-and-shoot cameras are designed to be either really small, or SLR-sized and not designed with the features for the advanced photographer. However, these few cameras are designed as a photographer's pocket camera. Cameras that offer more SLR-style controls and great results in a tiny package you can easily carry. I read a Dewitt Jones article in Outdoor Photographer where he talks about treating them like a lens, based on their small size and cost. Look at it like that and they become a bargain.

While there are many models of point-and-shoot cameras, when you are seeking raw capabilities, your choices drop to only a handful. Cameras like the Panasonic LX-3, Canon S-90 and Canon G-11 are the most popular. The Micro 4/3 cameras are starting to get close to this category in size, but in my opinion they are still too big to be a pocket camera and are really more like small SLRs.

I spent a few weeks researching and then after deciding on the Panasonic, spent several weeks of waiting for the LX-3 to be in stock.

Now I have a camera with me that has a 24mm f/2 Leica lens with a 24-60mm total zoom range (love that wide angle), PASM modes, raw shooting mode (Actually it can do raw + jpeg), 720P video capability, 1cm Macro, built-in image stabilization, and a hot shoe, with great ergonomics too. It's easy enough to hold and work the controls, but still small enough to fit in a cargo or shirt pocket.

The results it delivers are fantastic. Beyond all the specs, however, a camera still has to deliver results. This camera does. I can do 12x18 inch prints that look as good as, or better than, 35mm film ever did. I have done bigger prints yet and still get good results.



Noise is an issue for small sensor cameras, but one of the things I notice about the LX-3 is that the noise looks more like film grain and less like digital noise. In other words, it does not really bother me much as it looks "natural."



Something else I have noticed is my normal DSLR set up is my Canon 50D with a 17-50 f/2.8 lens. During a hand-holding situation, where I might be at ISO 1600 and wide open at f/2.8 with the DSLR, I can be at ISO 200 and f/2 on the LX-3 because of the faster lens and IS.

In the six months with this camera, it has become my constant companion. I take it to work every single day. At least once a week, I am getting an image on my way to the office or on my way home. I no longer have those "I only wish I had a camera" moments. I now get images instead. I take it when I walk the pups and can bring home snapshots for my wife. It also goes with me when I am out on a hike. I usually have the SLR gear in my pack but the LX-3 is handy and always ready too.

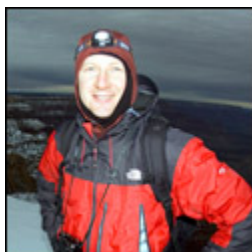
When I go out with my large format camera, it is the perfect little companion. The zoom range of the LX-3 (24-60mm) closely matches my large format lens lineup (75mm, 125mm, 210mm). It has a 4:3 ratio mode that closely matches the ratio of 4x5 film. I can scout with it before setting up the view camera. I can use it in raw + jpeg to capture a B+W for previsualization and still have a raw file to play with at home.

Finally, I can use it to make images of my camera for my large format blog (yes, I totally geek out and have a blog of images of my large format camera on location).

So now I have a small, simple, easy-to-carry, easy-to-use, and very effective camera.

It's the everyday camera!

Comments on NPN nature photography articles? Send them to the [editor](#). NPN members may also log in and leave their comments below.



Darren Huski is a landscape photographer from Fort Worth, Texas. He photographs the far reaches of the Lone Star State and throughout the American West and Midwest. He works with a 4x5 view camera and a modern digital SLR. His work and travels can be seen at www.WildernessPhotographer.net.

Darren also maintains the [Wilderness Photography Blog](#), where he documents his travels throughout the West and Midwest with both pictures and words.



Comment on this article: