

Onward and Upward

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As many of you have seen over the last month, there are some exciting things happening on NPN. What most of you are not aware of is that there are some other new initiatives about to come to fruition. All of this, of course, is to further enhance the value of NPN membership!

New IC Forum Software

Image critique has been an integral part of the NPN mission since our debut in April of 2000. Since then, we have relied on “canned” bulletin board scripts, making adaptations to use these commonly available programs to make them work for image critique. For the most part, they have worked reasonably well, but they are also cumbersome and overly complex to use. Additionally, there are certain features our members have requested that simply could not be done with any of these “freeware” systems. It had become obvious that a substantial investment in proprietary image critique software would best serve the needs of our members.

We are now pleased to announce our new, proprietary image critique software! The new IC software offers benefits that are not available with commercially available freeware bulletin board systems –

- **A visual smorgasbord – the thumbnail index.** Instead of a simple (and in many cases non-descript) text listing by title, the thumbnail index serves as a visual reference, helping to very quickly identify images of interest. Click the thumbnail or the “view” text link to view the full size image. No more guessing what you’re going to see when you select an image to view!
- **View a thumbnail index of all images** – the “All Photos” menu selection. With a single click of the mouse, you have the option to view a thumbnail index showing all galleries. For those who have interest in multiple nature photography genres, or for those who no longer want to miss those extraordinary images posted in the galleries they do not frequently visit, the new viewing option is sure to be a welcome addition!
- **View a thumbnail index of images by photographer.** No more searches, no more multiple clicks through multiple topic menus and text links. Simply click the name of the photographer next to a thumbnail to view all images by that photographer!
- **View a thumbnail index of your images** – the “My Photos” feature. At any time and from any forum page, simply click the My Photos link to view a thumbnail index of all of your own images!
- **View a thumbnail index of your favorite images** – the “Flagged Photo” feature. Are there some spectacular images you would like to view again without having to search for them? Use the “Flag Photo” option on the “View Images and Comments” page to place that image in your Flagged Photos folder. Use the Flagged Photos link to access your folder and view your favorite images!
- **Vastly simplified image hosting** – no more clumsy copying and pasting of code! NPN members can now “browse” and upload an image directly from the Post a Photo screen. Much easier, must faster!
- **Custom background colors** – select a background color for your image. You can use the standard white background, select an optional black background via radio button, or even a custom color background via hex code for your image to appear on! A hex code chart is available via a pop-up window to help you select a background color and its hex code number.

These features significantly improve ease-of-use and streamline the image critique process. Most of all, they make the new NPN image critique forums far more fun to use!

Please be sure to visit the [new IC forums](#). If you have any suggestions for features that you would like to see added to our new IC forum software, please feel free to send them to us at editor@naturephotographers.net.

PhotoPortfolios.net

We are not stopping with just the new IC forum software. The next phase in the software development will be our new, exclusive online portfolios! The new NPN online portfolios will replace the very limited imageculture.com 12-image portfolios we had previously offered as a NPN membership benefit. Based on the new image critique format, the standard portfolio will allow each of

our members to display up to 40 images in the same thumbnail index format. The thumbnails will serve as a link to the full size image, which will include a comprehensive list of information specific to that image. Image information will be entered via a selection of standard fields and menus the photographer has to choose from when uploading the image to their portfolio.

The heart of the new online portfolio web site will be the main page, where potential photo buyers will be provided a user-friendly system of finding your images. They will be able to view thumbnail indexes based on the photographer's name or genre (avian, landscape, fauna, flora, macro, man and nature, photo art and travel). Additionally, they will be able to search by a variety of parameters, including by key words and image format (large format, medium format, 35mm, and digital capture). The new online portfolios will be found on our new website, www.photoportfolios.net.

A portfolio upgrade option to 100 images will be offered, but you will NOT receive any unwanted solicitation to upgrade! The new website and online portfolios are expected to be ready for our members by December.

More than just nature photography?

There's no doubt that there are many NPN members who have an interest in other types of photography. Recognizing the need for our members to have an NPN-style outlet for their travel, adventure and vacation photography, we are pleased to announce our latest online publication, [Travel Photographers Online Magazine](#). "TPN" is modeled after NPN, including a cover page, online articles and an interactive section including image critique and travel photography discussion forums. The new IC software is now in use on TPN, and the new image critique forum, as well as the entire site has been very well received! Best of all, use of the TPN image critique forums and image hosting service is yet another benefit of NPN membership!

Be sure to check out the new Travel Photographers site, located at www.travelphotographers.net.

The Internet's number one nature photography web site?

Type in the phrase "nature photography" into any of the major search engines ([Yahoo!](#), [Google](#), etc.) and chances are you will find *Nature Photographers Online Magazine* at (or very near) the top of the list. According to [Alexa](#), NPN is the highest ranked website dedicated entirely to the art and technique of nature photography. Often imitated but *in fact* never equaled, NPN remains the Internet's top-ranked nature photography community and resource!

All for \$39 a year?

Yes! New image critique software and forums, new online portfolios for our members to display and market their work, a new online publication, an improved members' journal and the Internet's leading nature photography resource – this is what NPN membership has in store for you! Our mission is simple – to provide outstanding value, unprecedented educational and marketing opportunity, and the fun and camaraderie of the Internet's *premier* nature and travel photography online communities in a professionally run setting. NPN membership - it could very well be the best \$39 investment you will ever make!

For more information on NPN membership, please visit the [Nature Photographers Network](#) section. We look forward to your participation!

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Comments on NPN nature photography articles? Send them to the [editor](#).