



## NPN Member Profile...



### Michael Bates - NPN 0037



My interest in nature photography started several years ago when I moved to Austin, Texas from the Midwest (Illinois) in 1990. Although my interest and respect for nature began as a young child, I began capturing nature's beauty on film after discovering the flora and fauna of the Texas Hill Country - the wildflowers in the spring, the green anoles and gecko lizards greeting me at my door each morning and, last but not least, the gorgeous sunsets! In May, 1999 a career move brought me to the Houston area where I discovered a whole new world of photo opportunities - from alligators to wading birds - just minutes away from my front door. I am a broad-based

photographer who likes to "think out of the box". I enjoy the wide variety of subjects that nature provides - from the small world of macro to the wide-angle sunsets and landscapes, and everything in-between. My personal conviction is "Preserving the Beauty of Nature...one click at a time". While my day job as an insurance claims manager/adjuster seems to conflict with my getting out in the field as often as I would like, my long term goal is to be able to do nature photography as a full time career.

I used film cameras for years (the last one being a Nikon N90s) but jumped on the digital wave in 2001. The world of digital totally amazed me: the instant gratification of not having to wait for a lab to process my film; the extra savings of not having to "pay" for developing or "purchase" film; and, of course, the ability to edit/delete photos right in the field. I currently use a Nikon D100 Digital SLR coupled with Sigma lenses and various accessories. I have been published on several online magazines including Nature Photographers.net, Birdzilla.com and others. My work has been displayed on Gloria Mundi Press.com, Wildportraits.com, PBS.org, Nature Photographers.net and Profotos.com. I am a member of The Nature Conservancy, the Houston and National Audubon Societies, the National Wildlife Federation and Profotos.com. I have also donated several images to non-profit organizations to help educate the public on environmental awareness and species preservation.

In June 2000 I discovered Naturephotographers.net and was immediately hooked! Even though NPN was still in its infancy, it provided me a wealth of information - not only for equipment, but also pointers on improving my photography. The members of the site were helpful and very professional in their critiques and assistance. When the opportunity to become a Charter Member on NPN arose, I jumped on the bandwagon and have been a consistent contributor since the early days of the site. Most recently, I accepted the challenge to be a moderator in the Fauna and Macro Galleries, in addition to assisting with the Texas NPN group. I would never be where I am today in my photography without the vast amount of knowledge I have gained from NPN. It is truly the flagship of nature photography - hands down! The many tried and true friends I have made on NPN have given me my vision and helped me bring my photography to a truly professional level.



Michael's work in his website at [www.mbatesphoto.com](http://www.mbatesphoto.com).

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