

HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH BIRDS & BACKLIGHTING



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Backlighting can be a concern for virtually any bird photography scenario. It will require you to pay special attention to your camera settings and exposure values. If you aren't correctly set up, the bulk of the bird may not get enough exposure, which will result in low detail and color in the feathers, legs, and beak.

Perfect to print A5 size
14cm x 21cm
5.83" x 8.27"

GEAR UP

CAMERA

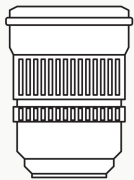


DSLR or mirrorless with Full Frame sensor



DSLR or mirrorless with APS-C sensor

LENS



Zoom lens

Zoom lens considerations:

- Focal length range
 - 150 – 600mm ✓
 - 100 – 400mm ✓
 - 70 – 200mm OK
- Max. aperture f/5.6 or wider
- Tripod collar

Metering modes:

Metering correctly is very important when photographing birds in backlight. Here's a quick guide to find the Spot or center-weighted pattern easily.

	SPOT	CENTER-WEIGHT
Canon		
Fuji		
Nikon		
Olympus		
Panasonic		
Pentax		
Sony		

SET IT UP

File format

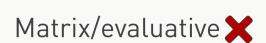


ISO setting



ADJUST AS NECESSARY

Metering Mode



Drive Mode



Shooting Mode



Focus Mode



UNLESS THE BIRD IS MOVING

Focus Points



SMALL CENTER CLUSTER

Shutter Speed: Min. 1/180th | Recommended: 1/250th +

Image Stabilization: On

Aperture: f/2.8 – f/11

Back Button Focus: Recommended

White Balance: Auto

Focus Tracking: On

Highlight Indicator: On

SHOOT IT

PRO TECHNIQUE:

Set the metering pattern to spot or center-weighted. Meter from the bird's body. Adjust the exposure for the color and tone of the bird



3..2..1..0..1..2..3+

For a light-colored bird:

Add a little more exposure (1/2 stop)



3..2..1..0..1..2..3+

For a dark-colored bird:

Use the nominal setting or reduce exposure slightly (1/4 Stop)



PRO TIP:

Try to position your camera relative to your bird subject so that the backlighting comes from an angle and not directly behind the bird. Be sure to use a lens hood.

✓ Recommended

OK Acceptable

✗ Not Recommended

! Not unless experienced