

Wildlife Photography

Tips from Mike Bray

1. Try to match your subjects with your camera equipment. Use long focal lengths for birds and distant animals. For shorter focal length lenses, you'll need to get closer to the animal.
2. Seek sharpness in your images; key on the animal's eyes. Use spot focus and enter the viewfinder on the eyes of the animal.
3. Use a shutter speed to match or exceed your focal length. (At 200mm focal length, the shutter speed should be at least/ $1/200^{\text{th}}$ of a second.)
4. To reduce camera shake, use a tripod or other means of steadying your camera. (This is a key for success for sharp images, especially when you are using a long lens.) Be sure to turn off image stabilization on your lens when you use a tripod.
5. Use a low f-stop to freeze the action, reduce motion blur, and blur the background (for example: f5.6 or f7.1).
6. Try getting low in relation to your subject. Experiment with different angles of view.
7. Simplify the background to make the subject stand out.
8. Watch the light. Adjust your camera settings for the lighting conditions.
9. Take plenty of back-up, especially memory cards and batteries.
10. Use continuous servo to capture moving subjects. This feature is called AI Servo in Canon cameras.
11. Use exposure compensation and fill flash when required.
12. Double-check your photos frequently for proper exposure and sharpness. Find your mistakes early and try new techniques.
13. Experiment and try new techniques.
14. Be patient. Wait to capture that special moment. Take lots of photos to increase your chances of getting your "special shot."