



## August 2023 Newsletter

### Image of the Month



This month's featured image comes with a story about the value of adapting to conditions on the ground. On a trip earlier this year, I was walking the beach at sunset and noticed how the light was causing a mirror-like reflection of some sandpipers wandering the beach. The following evening I wanted to try to photograph it.

An unruly dog and some equally unruly children had some other plans for the sandpipers and kept scaring them off. Frustrated, I started walking back up the beach. As I walked and watched the sun dipping lower on the horizon, I noticed this pair of Willets that were foraging along the edge of the surf. I got the idea to try to capture the sun setting right behind them.

It was more challenging to capture than it looks. For one, they were not static. They were walking along the edge of the water, randomly starting and stopping. Second, to get the shot I needed to be down at their eye level. It's hard to move with them while you're on knees and elbows and keeping your camera out of the sand. Fortunately, I was able to line up the shot at just the right moment.

When I got back to where my wife and mother-in-law were watching the sunset they thought I'd "gotten in a fight with the beach" because I had sand pretty much covering me from my neck down from my attempts at moving with the Willets. Importantly though, I kept my camera sand free. I imagine I looked quite comical holding it out in front of me like a holy relic as I trodded along the beach.

### Featured Artist

I've followed Oscar Garro on Instagram for quite a while. We both like to photograph similar subjects: wildlife and landscapes. Sometimes when making this newsletter a common theme emerges in the content (like hummingbirds last month). A photo he posted recently inspired this month's theme of sunsets.



If you've spent any time on Costa Rica's Cerro de la Muerte (literally the Mountain of Death) you know just how rare seeing a sunset there is. Don't let the name scare you either, it's one of my favorite places in the country. Not only are the colors dramatic and lively, this picture also captures some of the only Páramo in the world. Like me, Oscar primarily photographs wildlife but also has a fair number of landscape shots on his Instagram. To check out his wildlife photos and more cool shots, give Oscar a follow!

[Jean's Instagram](#)

## Fascinating Fact

What is Paramo? I'm glad you asked! (You probably didn't but I'm going to tell you anyhow because it's really cool and also that's what I do.)

Paramo is a unique ecosystem. It's essentially a tropical tundra where you're above the timberline but below the snow line. This creates a kind of dwarf, dense shrub and grassland. While it might appear to be rather inhospitable, it's actually teeming with life. But given the extreme conditions, species that can survive in the Paramo can't easily live elsewhere. The result is that the different areas of Paramo throughout Central and South America are isolated from one another and thus home to many endemic species of plants and animals.

In Costa Rica, you generally find Paramo starting at about 3,000 meters or 10,000 feet. The Cerro de la Muerte Massif (where the featured artist image was taken) has several peaks ranging between 3,000 and 3,500 meters in elevation. The Paramo there is very accessible. The Panamerican highway goes over the mountain and reaches its highest point in Central America there, near Cerro la Asunción at 3,345 meters above sea level (around 11,000 feet).

## News

—Costa Rica—



I'm going to be releasing a series of postcards with some of the most emblematic wildlife of the tropical lowlands of Costa Rica. (example above) They're available now in Costa Rica for 750 colones each. If you live in the local area I can coordinate delivery for free, otherwise I can ship them to you at cost.

For readers in the US, please contact me. I have a limited stock available to fulfill orders in the US. They are \$1.50 per postcard, plus shipping cost.

Click the link below to see the designs. If you liked this month's featured image, it's also one of the fourteen design options.

Postcards

## Tyler Wenzel Photography

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