

Don't freeze up at winter photos



MONTE NAGLER

Not much snow so far this winter, but you and I both know it's on the way. And when it arrives, don't let the snow keep you and your camera indoors.

Winter scenes are beautiful and have a mood all their own. The minor discomfort you might encounter in the cold air is well worth the exciting pictures that will be yours.

Here are some tips to help you capture those dramatic winter scenes on film:

- Keep your camera and film as warm as possible by keeping them under your jacket until it's time to shoot.
- Use a slow, steady motion to advance the film from one exposure to the next. This will reduce the strain on cold film and eliminate the possibility of static electric marks on the film.
- Wear thin gloves under your regular, heavier ones. When you're about to take a shot, remove the outer gloves leaving the inner pair for temporary protection while you focus and snap.
- Pay attention to lighting. Back or side lighting will enable you to capture the sparkle and textures of snow not obtainable with overhead lighting.
- Sun and bright snow will increase the chance of lens flare, so be sure to use your lens shade. However, intentional



Cool, man: This mountain stream surrounded by banks of freshly fallen snow made the ideal cold weather shot for Monte Nagler's camera. It was taken near Aspen, Colo.

lens flare can add drama and mood to your winter scenes, so experiment with a few shots.

• With color film, use your polarizer filter on a blue sky day. The resulting deep blue sky in your finished shot will look extra dramatic against the sparkling snow.

• Many winter scenes are monochromatic so now is a good time to experiment with some black and white film. For those of you who have never shot in black and white, you'll be pleasantly

surprised at your results.

Be aware the snow can fool your camera's meter. Winter scenes often don't contain the average proportions of lightness and darkness that all meters are calibrated to read.

Try taking a meter reading off your hand or a "gray" card or use an incident light meter if you should have one. A general rule to follow in winter scenes with lots of snow is to "open up" one to two f-stops from what the meter indicates.

Be on the lookout for closeup and unusual picture possibilities. Frost patterns on a window, sunlight shimmering through an icicle, and snow delicately etching a tree branch will all add exciting pictures to your winter portfolio.

Monte Nagler is a fine art photographer based in Farmington Hills. You can leave him a message by dialing (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then his mailbox number, 1873. His fax number is (810) 644-1314.

Matthaei Gardens class to explore the great outdoors

One of the University of Michigan Matthaei Botanical Gardens' adult education courses offered this winter invites you to join participants in the Ann Arbor area and the U-M Biological Station for the 20th year of winter knowledge and fun.

Members of the Friends of the Botanical Gardens receive 10 percent off any adult education class.

Call (313) 998-7061 for information.

The "Winter Hiker" class meets 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 22, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. three Saturdays, Jan. 25 and Feb. 1-8, and a northern weekend from after 4 p.m. Friday, Feb. 21 to 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 23. Cost is \$215.

Have you ever taken part in a "happy hour" inside a snow igloo that you just helped build? Tracked a snow-

shoe hare to see what it eats? Found a beaver dam and identified the trees used to build it? Spotted some winter mushrooms and wondered if they were good to eat? Visited the sand dunes on Lake Michigan when they were covered with snow?

Depending on snow conditions, the class will ski or hike, identifying and interpreting a wide variety of natural

areas.

The weekend trip is based at the U-M Biological Station at Pellston, 18 miles south of the Mackinac Bridge. Meal sharing and car pooling are encouraged; an intermediate level cross-country ski ability is helpful.

The fee includes all sessions and lodging at the station. Plan to be outside for some or all of each class.

Scheduled courses will help your garden and the environment

The Community House in Birmingham has scheduled a variety of home and garden classes.

The Community House is at 380 S. Bates. Call (810) 644-5832 for information.

Classes include:

- Landscape Design - 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Tuesdays beginning Feb. 4, four sessions for \$52. Discover the principles of landscape design, draft a base map of your home and learn how to prepare the site.

Instructor Merritt Wolson earned landscape degrees from Michigan State University and is the owner of Merrittscape Inc., a perennial farm and landscape

design company.

- Perennial Gardening - 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Tuesdays beginning March 4, three sessions for \$39. The class will help you select the best perennials for both sun and shade and show you, with slides, how to use them in beds and borders all around the house. Merritt Wolson is the

instructor.

- How to Make Your Home Environmentally Friendly - 7:30-9:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, \$10. A few simple techniques can help eliminate junk mail, improve your buying skills and provide practical solutions to everyday environmental concerns.