

Lesson: Photographing the Mt. Abram mini-ecosystem

“What you’re really looking for when you shoot with macro mode is not to get close, but to *magnify* the apparent size of the subject...” - David Busch

Objective: The purpose of this activity is to capture the flora and fauna of your 1 meter x 1 meter transect from any number of angles to create interesting and informative photographs that help students determine the similarities and differences between their transects. When shooting flora, capture a combination of individual and floral groupings to create a one-of-a-kind composition.

Note to Students: Our purpose is to photograph the flora and fauna in its natural setting, so please don’t pick or relocate in order to take a ‘nice shot’ and lose the integrity of your data collection.

Materials

- Digital Cameras (with Macro Mode feature)
- USB transfer cable, spare batteries, memory card
- Tripod (if available)

Time allotment: part of two 72-minute class periods

Grade Level: Grade 10

Learning Outcomes

Students will understand how the use of their camera’s macro mode and various photographer positions allows for more original final photographs of flora and fauna.

Suggested Procedure

1. Take a few initial photos to get a feel for the camera: get comfortable with its timing (delay), lighting, size, weight, anti-shake (steadies jittery hands), and zoom (how close can you get?)
2. Remember: regular mode allows you to photograph the main subject anywhere from three feet away from you while the macro mode allows the camera to focus from one to three feet. This allows you to magnify the main subject, your flora and fauna.
3. While it is typical to shoot from a standing position, keep in mind all of the Photo Yoga poses and try a few of those to vary the overall look of your photos.

4. You may find that the best photos you capture are taken from a bug's eye view – that's right, get down on the ground to shoot through some of your flora to focus and capture flora in the mid-field depth, as this will add more drama and interest to your photos.
5. Having trouble keeping the camera steady – no worries, even the pros have trouble sometimes. Try mounting your camera to the tripod and see if that proves to be just what you needed to get it the photo you want.
6. Once you have gathered all your photos, you will need to upload them to your laptop into iPhoto so that they will be available to you when you need them for your mini-ecosystem website.