

WILDLIFE

PHOTOGRAPHIC

ISSUE 75 SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2025

**UNIVERSAL
MOTHERHOOD**
RAMDAS IYER

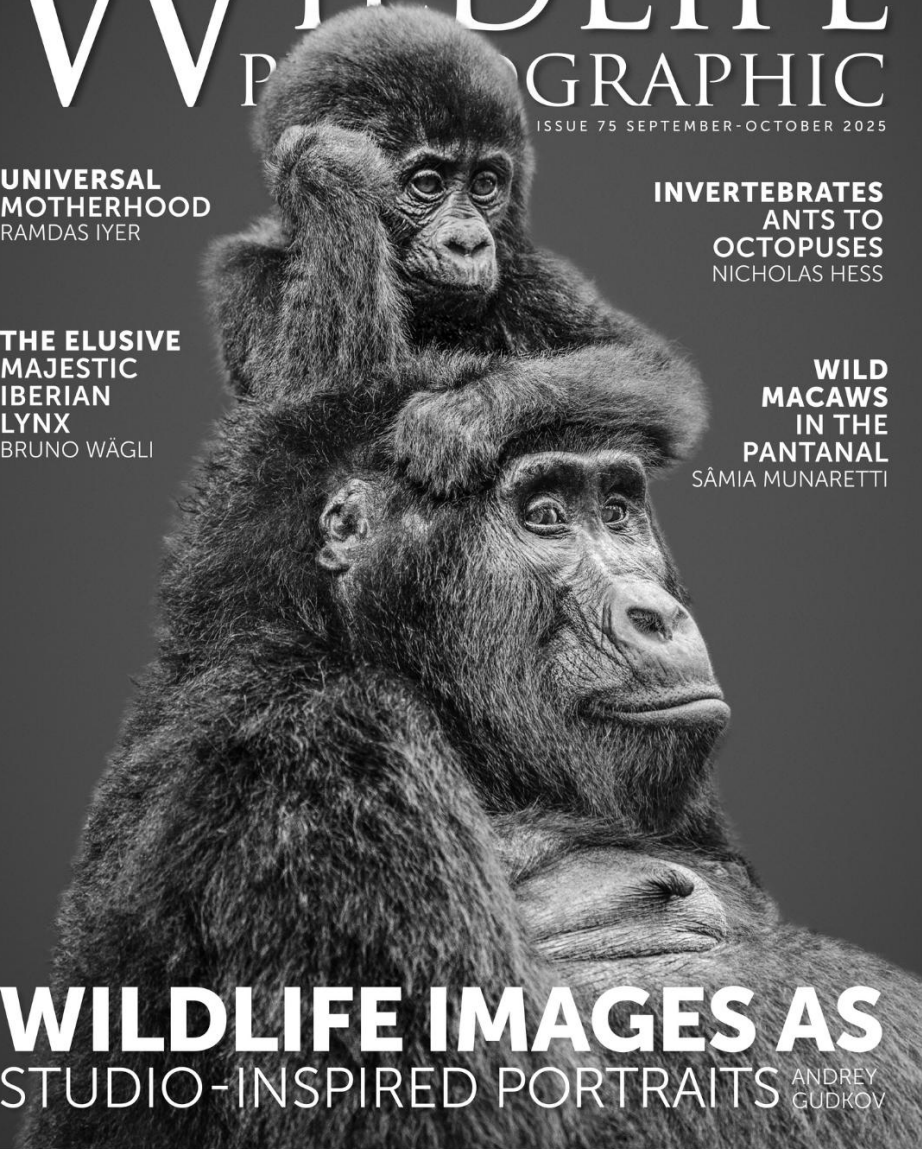
**INVERTEBRATES
ANTS TO
OCTOPUSES**
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**THE ELUSIVE
MAJESTIC
IBERIAN
LYNX**
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**WILD
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WILDLIFE IMAGES AS
STUDIO-INSPIRED PORTRAITS

ANDREY
GUDKOV



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WHEN THEY ARE FREE, PART II: A CREATIVE EXPERIMENT IN CONTRAST AND PRESENCE WHERE FREEDOM IS NEVER EDITED OUT

by Andrey Gudkov

In this second installment by Andrey Gudkov, black and white processing is used to transform authentic wildlife images into powerful, studio-inspired portraits. By carefully selecting photographs with striking posture, texture, and emotion, and using light and background to sculpt depth, the animals remain fully wild—just seen through a different lens.



FIELD NOTES: CAPTURING A RAINFOREST ICON - THE RED-EYED TREE FROG OF COSTA RICA

by David & Pui Hang Miles

With its vivid colors and wide red eyes, the Red-eyed tree frog has become the unmistakable symbol of Costa Rica's rich biodiversity. David Miles explores what makes this charismatic amphibian both a photographic favorite and a global ambassador for rainforest conservation.



VIDEO SERIES: LOW LIGHT, HIGH DRAMA - PHOTOGRAPHING BLACK GROUSE IN PERTSHIRE

by Espen Helland

Join wildlife photographer Espen Helland on a pre-dawn mission to capture the elusive Black grouse on the Lek in Perthshire. In this video, he shares essential low light photography tips and techniques for working in challenging lowlight conditions.

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PATIENCE AND PRESENCE: A RARE ENCOUNTER WITH ONE OF EUROPE'S MOST ELUSIVE PREDATORS - THE IBERIAN LYNX

by Bruno Wägli

From the wild heart of Spain, Bruno Wägli takes us along for a rare encounter with the elusive Iberian lynx. This feature explores the patience, preparation, and technical precision required to photograph one of Europe's most endangered predators from a hide. From camera settings to field conditions, Bruno breaks down the techniques behind capturing fleeting moments in challenging light.



IMAGE CRITIQUE: THE NIGHT SHIFT

by John Meragias

Professional wildlife photographer John Meragias provides pro tips and advice on reader-submitted wildlife photos - how to take your wildlife photo compositions from good to great!



HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT: A PHOTOGRAPHER'S LOOK AT THE STRANGE, STUNNING, AND SURPRISINGLY COMMON LIVES OF INVERTEBRATES

by Nicholas Hess

Nicholas Hess takes readers on a photographic journey through the overlooked world of invertebrates - from ants to octopuses. With insight into technique, gear, and the quiet art of noticing, this feature reveals just how extraordinary the ordinary can be.

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EDITOR'S CHOICE OF READER SUBMITTED WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHS

WP showcases the best images submitted by readers from around the world.



FROM RAINFOREST TO ICE: PHOTOGRAPHING THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE OF MOTHERHOOD

by Ramdas Iyer

In this visually rich article, Ramdas Iyer explores the photographic challenges of capturing maternal care across varied environments—from the treetops of tropical rainforests to the icy shores of Antarctica. With a focus on timing, patience, and fieldcraft, he documents the complexity and resilience of motherhood in the wild.



CHASING COLOR AND MEANING IN THE PANTANAL: PHOTOGRAPHING WILD MACAWS

by Sâmia Munaretti

Sâmia Munaretti shares her approach to photographing Blue-and-yellow and Hyacinth Macaws in the world's largest tropical wetland. She covers timing, light, and technique—along with the deeper meaning behind documenting these iconic birds in the wild. It's a story of color, connection, and the quiet urgency of conservation through photography.

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PATIENCE AND PRESENCE:

A Rare Encounter With One of Europe's Most Elusive Predators - The Iberian Lynx

by Bruno Wägli

Spain is home to more biodiversity than any other country in Europe. Nowhere else on the continent offers such a good chance to spot one of its most fascinating wild animals: the Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*).

Lynx encounters with humans are rare in Northern Europe. That's why the lynx hardly ever appears in myths, fairy tales, and legends. Due to the very few attacks on farm animals, their presence has polarized opinion much less than that of other large predators since its successful reintroduction, which began in the Alpine region around 30 years ago.



Juvenile Iberian lynx at waterhole -
Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 40-150mm F2.8 Pro
120mm, 1/250 s, f2.8, ISO 1250



Juvenile Iberian lynx at waterhole -
Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
150mm, 1/640 s, f5, ISO 6400



The *Lynx pardinus* is a distinct species, smaller and more delicate than its Eurasian cousin, though similar in appearance. Spotted fur, tufted ears, a stubby tail, and - in adults - prominent facial ruffs are typical features. In the wild, Iberian lynxes live for around 8 to 10 years, and litters range from one to four cubs.

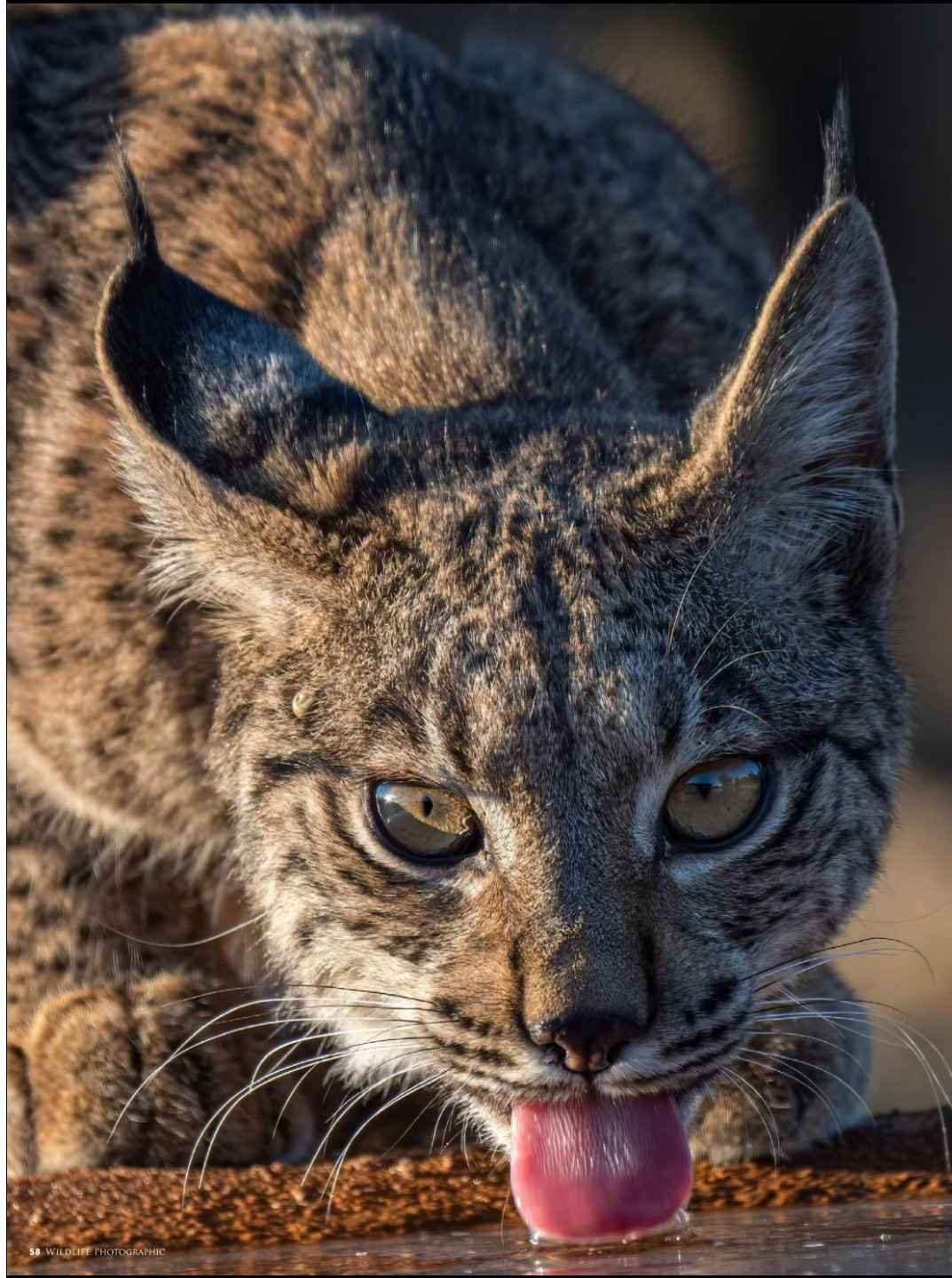
Like all lynxes, the Iberian lynx is a solitary and mostly a crepuscular ambush predator. Its preferred prey is the wild rabbit, which it stalks with great patience and a burst of speed. Ironically, this dietary specialization nearly brought about its downfall as a virus outbreak among rabbits on the Iberian Peninsula caused the lynx's food supply to collapse, with devastating consequences.



Pacing by - Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
213mm, 1/640 s, f5, ISO 5000

Wild rabbit, the lynxes' favorite food on which it depends so heavily - Finca El Altozano, Sierra de Andújar, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
213mm, 1/500 s, 4.f5, ISO 250

By the early 2000s, the species had declined to just 80 individuals, making it the most endangered cat in the world. But a coordinated conservation effort - including habitat protection, captive breeding, and particularly the active reintroduction of rabbits - helped turn the tide.



Today, an estimated 2,000 lynxes roam the Iberian Peninsula. Still, challenges remain: habitat fragmentation, agricultural pressures, and illegal hunting continue to threaten their recovery.

One of the best places to look for lynxes is the Parque Natural de la Sierra Morena, about two hours south of Madrid. This landscape of scrubland, open forest, and rolling grassland provides ideal habitat.

The eye of the lynx -
Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain
*OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
500mm, 1/500 s, f5.6, ISO 1000*



Playing kittens - Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
195 mm, 1/500 s, f5, ISO 1000

Playing kittens -
Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
195 mm, 1/500 s, f5, ISO 1000



Rabbit populations are actively supported here, and in winter — particularly during the December mating season — the chances of a daytime sighting improve considerably.

In December 2024, I joined a small group of Swiss wildlife photographers for a multi-day trip to the region. Before sunrise, we entered a photography hide in Castile-La Mancha. The morning was freezing; a thin crust of ice covered the waterhole in front of us.

For hours, we waited in silence — motionless, watchful, hopeful. Lynxes are incredibly shy and disappear at the slightest disturbance. Patience is the price of admission.

Several local operators offer lynx tours in Sierra Morena, as well as in nearby areas like Doñana National Park and the Sierra de Andújar. Some tours rely on hides — with varying levels of comfort, some with artificial waterholes, some also with artificial lighting — while others involve short hikes or open-air observation.



Stalking lynx - Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain

OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
500mm; 1/250 s, f5.6; ISO 1250



Male lynx near illuminated waterhole -
Finca El Altozano, Sierra de Andújar, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
400mm, 1/25s, f4.5, ISO 4000



Female Iberian lynx -
Finca El Altozano, Sierra de Andújar, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
367mm, 1/640 s, f4.5, ISO 500

Always observant -
Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain
OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
150mm, 1/200 s, f4.5, ISO 12800



Regardless of method, sightings are never guaranteed. On our trip, we saw a lynx on about half the observation days, usually for just a few fleeting minutes. Fortunately, bird photography offers a welcome distraction while waiting.

Photographing lynxes poses some technical challenges. They are most active at dawn and dusk, when light is scarce. High ISO settings are often unavoidable. Fortunately, today's cameras - and AI-assisted processing - make this less of an obstacle.

My camera's autofocus and subject tracking worked well even in low light. Adult lynxes tend to move slowly, allowing for longer exposures, but photographing playful juveniles requires fast shutter speeds.

Very first light -
Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain
*OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
150mm, 1/160 s, f4.5, ISO 12800*





Telephoto lenses in the 200-600 mm or 800 mm range are ideal. I used two camera bodies to avoid swapping lenses during critical moments: one with a 150-400 mm zoom (equivalent to 300-800 mm in full-frame), the other with a 40-150 mm (80-300 mm).

A sturdy tripod or a monopod is helpful for heavier lenses, though a beanbag works fine in hides. Winter conditions call for good weather protection for humans as well as camera gear - and plenty of batteries and memory cards.

After many hours of cold, quiet waiting - and more than a few disappointments - seeing an Iberian lynx in its natural habitat is a moment of pure magic. Capturing it on camera is a rare privilege. But even without the perfect shot, the experience alone is unforgettable.

Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain

*OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
280 mm, 1/160 s, f4.5, ISO 8000*

Golden hour - Finca Peñalajo near Santa Cruz de Mudela, Spain

OM-1MarkII, OM System 150-400mm F4.5 TC Pro
250mm, 1/640 s, f5, ISO 800



About the Photographer
Bruno Wägli

Bruno Wägli, Ph.D in contemporary history, enjoys nothing more than to go on extended photo trips to remote areas. He fell in love with southern Africa and its abundant wildlife: Namibia, Botswana, Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, and above all, Zambia are countries he likes to rediscover time and time again. Other favorite places of his include the northern and southern polar regions (Antarctica, Greenland, Spitzbergen), Alaska, and the Yukon. Bruno also keeps chasing new motifs in his home country of Switzerland, where the natural beauty of the Alps and of the many lakes and rivers never cease to excite him.

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