

William G. Hartshorn: “Half Dome Crescent Reflection”

Finding the absolute moment in landscape photography is completely dependent on different variables: You need the perfect vantage point, the perfect light, the perfect subject, the perfect lens, the perfect camera, and the list goes on and on. The absolute moment is when all these elements collide into a cohesive recipe for a one-of-a-kind shot. That's what landscape and wildlife photography is all about—finding that absolute perfect moment and clicking the shutter at the precise fraction of a second. William G. Hartshorn knows exactly how to do it, and here he clues us into how he exposed for this Yosemite treasure.

Adam Crawford: Location?

William G. Hartshorn: This is an area just south of the trail to lower Yosemite Falls that leads into Yosemite meadow. Once you are about in the center of the meadow, there is a spot that has a small pond. If there is enough runoff during the year you can use it as a reflection.

AC: Time of day?

WGH: Late afternoon with the sun setting west of the Valley.

AC: What's the story behind this shot?

WGH: The light was changing fast when I was photographing the church across the meadow, then I looked toward Half Dome and saw some clouds and color starting to surround the peak, so I went—actually sprinted—across the meadow to this location before losing the light and found the reflection in the pond. Wow! The sun was setting to the west and the last light started to glow on the peak, producing this amazing light and afterglow on the peak and the clouds in the area.

AC: How difficult was it to capture?

WGH: The real challenge here was to carry the foreground light without burning out the light on the peak. A 1–3-stop graduated ND filter was used

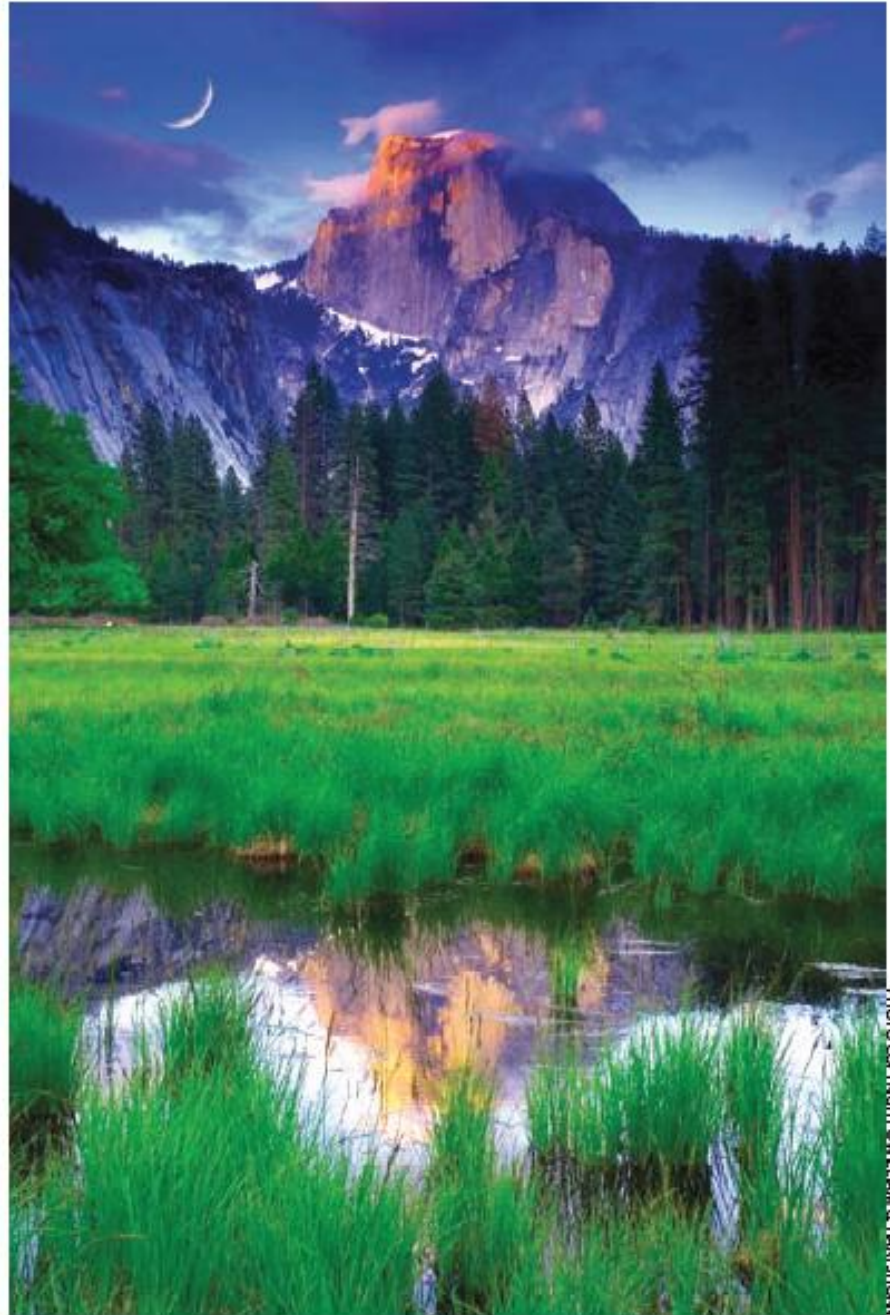


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to carry/balance the light.

AC: How did you expose for this shot?

WGH: 4 seconds at f/22 at ISO 50.

AC: What camera and lens did you use?

WGH: Canon 5D and EF 24–105mm

f/4L IS USM with image-stabilizing technology that steadies camera shake up to three stops



Adam Crawford is the Associate Editor of both Rangefinder and AfterCapture magazines.