

December 2025 Newsletter



Hi to Everyone,

The end of the year is upon us, and I've finished my favorite 20 images of 2025 PDF. For those of you that have participated on safaris with me, my top pick will come as no surprise. Here are some statistics from those top 20 images. It reinforces my opinions about equipment, safari times, and locations.

Top 20 of 2025 Breakdown by Time-of-Day

5:30am to 10am - **12** Selections
10am to Noon - **4** Selection
Noon to 4pm - **2** Selections
4pm to 7pm - **2** Selections

Clearly, getting out early is a prime driver in great photo encounters. Sixteen (**80%**) of my top 20 images were taken before noon, with the majority taken before

10am. Wildlife is particularly active in those first hours after sunrise, so missing breakfast is just a small sacrifice and the first step to success.

Top 20 of 2025 Breakdown by Subjects

Songbirds/Raptors/Gamebirds - **7** Selections
Landscapes/Scenics - **1** Selection
San Juan Island Fox Safari - **4** Selections
Big-Game Species - **3** Selections
Animal Predators - **4** Selections
Amphibians - **1** Selection

Birds are everywhere, thus we have more opportunities for quality encounters on our own personal photo trips by paying attention to the birds around us. Another important consideration is location - 11 selections come from known high-quality locations and trips, the most coming from the San Juan Island Fox Safari, with Yellowstone/Tetons coming in second. While just 1 selection came from landscapes subjects and amphibians - for me, they are more targets of opportunity instead of subjects I'm seeking after.

Top 20 of 2025 Breakdown by Lens

600mm Telephoto - **8** Selections
500mm Telephoto - **7** Selection
100-400 f4 Zoom - **3** Selections
105mm f2.8 Macro - **1** Selections
24-120 f4 Zoom - **1** Selections

Nearly all of my top 20 images of 2025 come from shooting longer lenses. 18 selections (**90%**) come from lenses 400mm or longer. 15 selections (**75%**) come from long telephotos, the most from the 600mm telephoto. Long telephoto lenses allow us to photograph wildlife without pushing them, giving us more time to capture quality images without startling them or scaring them away.

These statistics point to getting out early, using a longer telephoto lens, and paying attention to the birds around you. Most other subjects (bears, elk, deer, coyotes, etc) are obvious and hard to drive-by without seeing them, while birds can be invisible if you aren't looking specifically for them.

Completed just a couple of days ago, the Bosque del Apache NWR (NM) and the Texas Wildlife Safari follow these statistics. While we shot all wildlife, we were concentrating on birds, particularly early in the morning (bad light and all), and all of us were shooting longer lenses. Some selected images from these two back-to-back safaris are in the Gallery section of this newsletter.

Now, my favorite image from all the safaris I did this year is shown below. The infamous boar grizzly on a bull elk carcass.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Boar Grizzly on Bull Elk Carcass | Yellowstone Fall Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com

I chose this image because of how raw and wild it is. As I mention in the PDF (Top 20 of 2025) I've shot many grizzlies feeding on carcasses before, but the angle was unique. The viewpoint was from a highway pullout about 2 miles east of Lake Butte Overlook, in Yellowstone. This is a common area to patrol looking for photographable grizzlies from spring through late fall. The full story of this shot is in the PDF. The unobstructed view was unique. From ground level the view to the carcass and grizzly would be obscured by tall grass and possibly willow branches, but from the road about 25 feet above ground level it was a spectacularly clear

view. The grizzly is laying on the elk carcass to protect it from other grizzlies, and there were two others within view, one being the famous grizzly sow Snow, having cut her two cubs loose in the spring. She might have even mated with this boar, but now that hyperphagia (near constant eating to put on fat for the winter) was in full flow, she was just another competitor for the meat.

[LINK to download Favorite 20 of 2025 PDF](#)

Each year in Yellowstone wildlife photography improves, and as hard as it is to believe by those who aren't there often, 2025 was even better than 2024. I expect 2026 to be better as well. My first winter trip in a few weeks is sold out, but there are 2 openings for the second winter safari. ([LINK](#)) Also, there are a couple of openings for the spring safari. ([LINK](#)) If you haven't shot Yellowstone with someone who knows the parks secret wildlife locations, the habits of its wildlife, then it is time to get after it. While the park will always be here, we may not be. **BRP**

Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat. Theodore Roosevelt

[Snow Goose Bathing | Bosque del Apache NWR Bird Safari](#)

Click the link above to download the wallpaper in a new window, then right-click and copy it to your computer. You can see all **FREE** Wallpaper here: ([LINK](#)) The wallpaper is sized to 1980 px by 1080 px to easily fit most computer screens.



All the currently scheduled upcoming 2025 Photo Safaris and Workshops are shown on the Safari Page on my website. That is the most accurate location to view these

events. Here is a [LINK](#) to that page. Below are links to the individual safaris for the next several months. New safaris are added every few weeks. Upcoming ZOOM Shows are here - [LINK](#).

2025 Safari Schedule

January 5 CA Coast Wildlife ([LINK](#))
January 9-15 Yellowstone Winter Safari **SOLD OUT**
January 16 Utah Raptor Safari ([LINK](#))
January 20 Snow-shoe in Sequoia Safari ([LINK](#))
January 21 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
January 22 Northern Pygmy Owl Safari **SOLD OUT**
January 30-February 5 Yellowstone Winter Safari ([LINK](#)) **2 Openings**

February 9-11 NWR Bird Safaris ([LINK](#))
February 13 Northern Pygmy Owl Safari ([LINK](#))
February 17 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
February 19 So California Bird Safari ([LINK](#))
February 24 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

March 16 Santa Cruz Island Gray Fox Safari ([LINK](#))
March 23 Southern CA Bird Safari ([LINK](#))
March 25 Great Horned Owl Safari ([LINK](#))

April 8-9 Ghost Town of Bodie ([LINK](#))
April 11 CA Poppies and Wildflowers ([LINK](#))
April 13-16 Southern Utah Spring Landscapes ([LINK](#))
April 23-29 Arizona-Texas Bird Safari ([LINK](#)) **2 Openings**

May 4 Morongo Bird Safari ([LINK](#))
May 12-14 San Juan Island Fox Safari ([LINK](#)) **2 Openings**
May 18 Peregrine Falcons ([LINK](#))
May 26 to June 2 Yellowstone Spring Wildlife Safari ([LINK](#)) **3 Openings**

June 14 Peregrine Falcons ([LINK](#))
June 16 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))
June 18 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))
June 23 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))
June 25 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))

September 21-26 Yellowstone Fall Wildlife Safari ([LINK](#))
September 28-Oct 2 San Juan Mountains (CO) Safari ([LINK](#))

December 15-17 Bosque del Apache NWR Bird Safari ([LINK](#))

Gallery from Bosque del Apache Safari

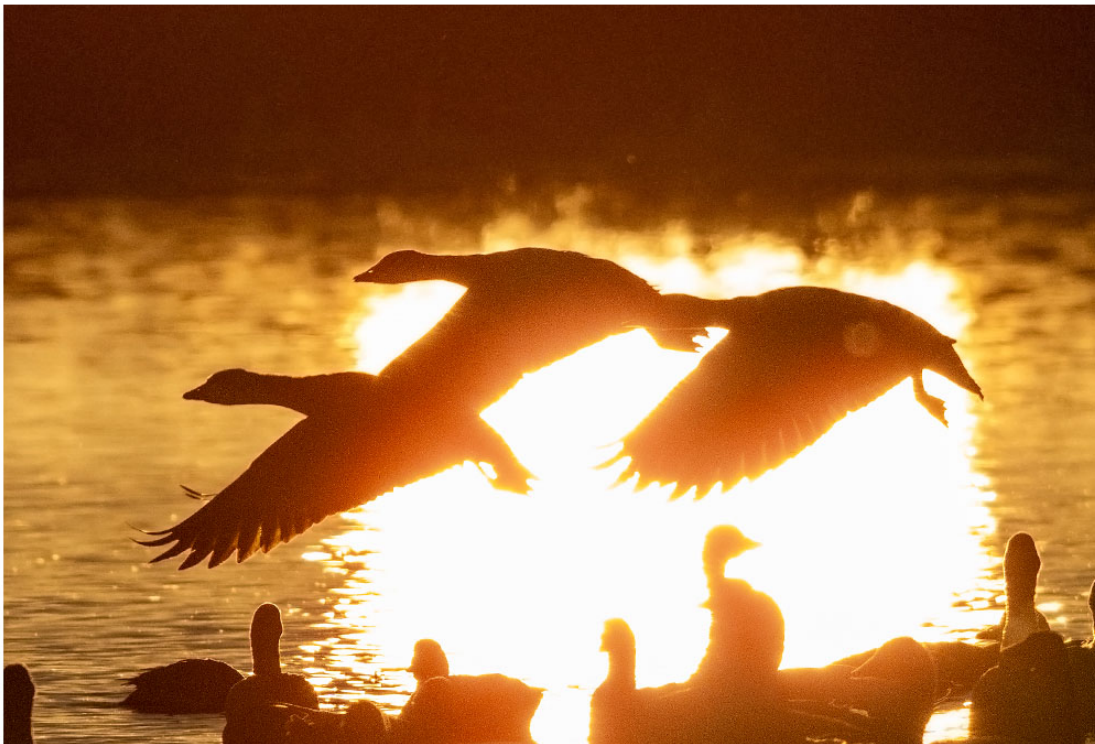


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Aerobatic Snow Geese | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari



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Sandhill Crane at Sunrise | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Sunrise Snow Geese | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Snow Geese landing in Cornfield | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
4x4 Mule Deer Buck | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari amwestphoto.com



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BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Snow Geese landing in Cornfield | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Great Horned Owl | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
American Kestrel | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari



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Javelina Mom and baby | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari amwestphoto.com



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Drake Mallard landing | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari
amwestphoto.com



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Hen Mallard landing | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari
amwestphoto.com



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Moon and Snow Geese | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari
amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Mtn Bluebird | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Sharp-shinned Hawk | Bosque del Apache NWR Safari

Gallery from Texas Wildlife Safari



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Black-crested Titmouse | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Black-throated Sparrow | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Long-billed Thrasher | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Eastern Phoebe landing | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Male Pyrrhuloxia | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Audubon's Oriole | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Eastern Screech Owl in Owl Box | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Green Jay | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Scaled (Blue) Quail | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Ladderback Woodpecker | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Javelina | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Orange-crowned Warbler | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



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Greater Kiskadee at feeder | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Altamira Oriole | Texas Wildlife Safari amwestphoto.com

Last Call Notes:

Of particular note is image #2 of my favorite 20 images from 2025. I'm more of a portrait photographer than someone who includes a lot of environment in an image - which is clear from these Safar Gallery images. But that image of 3 coyotes descending Miller Butte via the cliffs was something I envisioned the moment I saw the coyotes on the ridge. The bighorn sheep had fled as the coyotes worked their way down the cliffs. There was a fourth coyote, but it was too far out-of-frame to include in this image. The level of natural camouflage makes the coyotes nearly invisible, only their movement made them stand out. I just really enjoyed seeing the possibilities of that image materialize (for a change) as the coyotes maneuvered exactly where I needed them to go, at a reasonably slow speed.

Finally, I shot just under 50k images on the Bosque/Texas back-to-back safaris and I only went through a small number to pull these images - so some better ones might appear in a different newsletter once I've edited through them all. With the Yellowstone Winter safaris on the horizon, I'm sure I will get backed up trying to stay current. There are still two openings on the second Winter Yellowstone Safari - fill one of those spots and besides a hefty discount you will get some photographic opportunities people can only wish for - I guarantee it.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brent Russell Paull".

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Please forward this e-mail to your photographer friends, maybe we can make a connection that otherwise would never happen. The world of photography is vast and only getting bigger. Also, I can sometimes change safari dates to accommodate folks, so if you would like to do a custom date, or see if I can switch a date, just let me know.

