

March 2026 Newsletter

Yellowstone Spring Wildlife Safari **May 26 - June 2**

The Unexpected Encounters



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Hi to Everyone,

April has been a busy month of photo safaris. First came a safari to the horses in Utah's West Desert, followed by a safari into the Eastern Side of the Sierra-Nevada Mountains, and lastly the Southern Utah Safari. Each one had some great moments with either landscapes or wildlife, and sometimes both - and I appreciate everyone who participated in those safaris. As usual, it is my fellow photographers who made it fun for me.

The wild horses were nothing short of spectacular. Lots of behavior and interaction between the smaller herds, and their stallion and mares - especially as they mixed with dozens of other small herds to form another large herd. I didn't count the total number, but I would say in excess of 150 horses. Our first encounter came as the entire large herd moved right through our location. After crossing through our position and moving into the valley farther, we walked out and just slowly moved around the entire group. Over the course of the day we circled the entire herd three times, each time getting different light in different positions, and different reactions among the horses as the intermingled. Stallion fights were very common.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Fighting Stallions | Utah Wild Horse Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Fighting Stallions | Utah Wild Horse Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Stallions Meet-up | Utah Wild Horse Safari amwestphoto.com



The variety of wild horses makes photography difficult - just when you see one you want to concentrate on, another quickly appears to draw your attention. As we circled the herd, walking, they seemed oblivious to us, always staying about 30-40 yards away. There was one particular colt that I had photographed 6 weeks earlier that we saw one the far side - so we eventually worked our way around and got some incredible images. Recent rains had begun to green up the valley, though there seemed to be better feed around that the horses ignored. Every color of horse seemed to be around - red bays, chestnuts, blacks, paints, appaloosas, grays, whites, roans, grullas, buckskins, duns - and some more exotic looking mixtures.





BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Appaloosa Stallion | Utah Wild Horse Safari
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Small Group of Wild Horses | Utah Wild Horse Safari
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Fighting Stallions | Utah Wild Horse Safari
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Dark Bay Stallion | Utah Wild Horse Safari
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BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
North Herd-Onaqui Wild Horses | Utah Wild Horse Safari
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On the second day the rains descended and photography became impossible. We followed a very muddy trail out to the horse herd only to see them all bolt west. Seeing that many horses running was another amazing moment, but what wasn't

amazing was the mud. With sheets of rain coming down they vanished into the mist about two miles west of us, so after a few hours driving we finished the day in Zion looking for desert bighorn sheep.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
The Northern Onaqui herd runs away in the Rain | Utah Wild Horse Safari amwestphoto.com

Unlike the rain in Utah the week before, we had some severe clear conditions along the eastern Sierras. We worked the roads leading to the many lakes, some still frozen over - like Virginia Lakes. I heard booming Sooty Grouse in the distance, but never found them at Convict Lake and Virginia Lakes. We also travelled to Silver Lake, June Lake, Lundy Lake, Twin Lakes, and Mono Lake - all providing some great landscapes, and at least at Virginia Lakes we ran into some Mountain Bluebirds and a variety of others.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Beaver Ponds above Lundy Lake | Eastern Sierra Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Bush Lupines and Mt. Muir | Eastern Sierra Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Osprey | Eastern Sierra Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Male Mountain Bluebird | Eastern Sierra Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Male Mountain Bluebird | Eastern Sierra Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Clouds above the South Tofu Towers | Eastern Sierra Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Osprey nearing Nest with Jewelry | Eastern Sierra Safari amwestphoto.com

On the southern Utah Safari we shot in Zion, Bryce Canyon, Monument Valley, Leeds Creek, and the Beaver Dam Slope. We had lots of landscape opportunities and a few birds and wildflower moments. I was really disappointed by Monument Valley - as they seem to be making life more difficult for photographers. They raised prices by 300%, not just charging the usual \$15 per vehicle, but now adding \$10 per

person as well. They let us in at 7am, but wouldn't open the valley road until 8am, meaning we lost an hour of early light waiting at the lodge. The lodge cafe was open, but only tourists staying at the Tribal Park Hotel could eat there. They told us to come back at 10am for the breakfast, but at 10am they closed the buffet and we got nothing - so we ate at Goulding's Lodge instead. Blooming yucca's and wildflowers blanketed the valley, and the landscapes were as awesome as always.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
The East Temple - Zion NP | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Kolob Terrace view to the West Temple - Zion NP | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Young Ponderosa - Zion NP | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Rain drifts through the Towers of the Virgin - Zion NP | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Fragrant Sand Verbena - Zion NP | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com

After shooting Kolob Terrace in western Zion in the late afternoon, rain showers moved in slowing photography for a couple of hours the next morning, but we moved on to Bryce Canyon in the afternoon. The following day we woke up to 3-4 inches of fresh snow and a cold breeze in Bryce Canyon. The snow created an

ethereal landscape among the towering redrock hoodoos of Queen's Garden -
amazing vistas in every direction.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Queen's Garden Hoodoos - Bryce Canyon NP | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Eroded Colors - Bryce Canyon NP | Southern Utah Safari



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY

Bryce Canyon National Park | Southern Utah Safari

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Ignoring the strange rules at the Monument Valley Tribal Park and the exorbitant fees, we got out early to do what sunrise images we could. The banana yucca plants were in full bloom, and tufted evening primrose and notch-leaved phacelia covered much of the open areas. We also ran into a very cooperative black-throated sparrow that gave us some really good moments.



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY

Silhouetted Towers at Sunrise in Monument Valley | Southern Utah Safari

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BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Northern Monument Valley | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Dew on Tufted Evening Primrose - Monument Valley | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Black-throated Sparrow on Banana Yucca | Southern Utah Safari



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Black-throated Sparrow on Banana Yucca | Southern Utah Safari

Having lived in St. George for more than 5 years I learned as many nearby areas as possible. Two of those, Leeds Creek and the Beaver Dam Slope, gave us both landscapes and birds. In those days I was regularly contributing to St. George Magazine, which was similar to Arizona Highways Magazine. Over those years I became friends with the caretaker at the Lytle Ranch Preserve - which was an old cattle ranch located in the Beaver Dam Wash, near the Utah-Nevada border, first managed by the Nature Conservancy, then as an outdoor laboratory by Brigham Young University. It had been many years since I drove through the Joshua Tree Forest on the Beaver Dam Slope, leading from the Beaver Dam Mountains. While we photographed landscapes, like this one (below) looking west to the Terry Benches in Nevada, I was surprised by all the birds we encountered - a great way to end the trip. **BRP**



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
View to the Terry Benches from the Beaver Dam Slope | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Say's Phoebe on Joshua Tree | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Say's Phoebe | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



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Ash-throated Flycatcher on Joshua Tree | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Ash-throated Flycatcher on Joshua Tree | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com



BRENT PAULL PHOTOGRAPHY
Loggerhead Shrike on Joshua Tree | Southern Utah Safari amwestphoto.com

**You can lead a man to congress, but you can't make him think.
Comedian Milton Berle**

[Joshua Tree Forest - Beaver Dam Wash | Southern Utah 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.



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Joshua Trees - Beaver Dam Slope view to the Terry Benches | Southern Utah Safari

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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](#).

2026 Safari Schedule

May 4 Morongo Bird Safari ([LINK](#)) **1 Opening left**
May 12-14 San Juan Island Fox Safari ([LINK](#)) **1 Opening left**
May 18 Peregrine Falcons ([LINK](#))
May 20 Mineral King - Sooty Grouse ([LINK](#))
May 26 to June 2 Yellowstone Spring Wildlife Safari ([LINK](#)) **2 Openings left**

June 3 Utah Wild Horses ([LINK](#))
June 14 Peregrine Falcons ([LINK](#))
June 16 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))
June 18 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))
June 23 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#)) **SOLD OUT**
June 25 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))

July 7 Mineral King - Sooty Grouse ([LINK](#))
July 8 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))
July 21 Mineral King - Sooty Grouse ([LINK](#))
July 22-23 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))

August 4-5 Black Bear Safari ([LINK](#))
August 31-Sept 1 Utah Wild Horses ([LINK](#))

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

October 13-14 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
October 20 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
October 27-30 Southern Utah Fall Safari ([LINK](#))

November 10-11 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
November 12 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

December 3 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
December 8-9 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
December 15-17 Bosque del Apache NWR Bird Safari ([LINK](#))
December 29 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

2027 Safari Schedule

January 6-7 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
January 14-21 Yellowstone Winter Wildlife Safari ([LINK](#))
January 22 Utah Wild Horses ([LINK](#))

February 3 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

February 9-10 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))
February 18-19 Utah Wild Horses ([LINK](#))
February 25 Bobcat Safari ([LINK](#))

April 26-29 Southern Utah Spring Safari ([LINK](#))

May 21-28 Yellowstone Spring Safari ([LINK](#))

June 1-7 Yellowstone Spring Safari ([LINK](#))
June 8 Utah Wild Horses ([LINK](#))

Last Call Notes:

Finally, I've added several new safari dates for the Utah Wild Horses Safaris ([LINK](#)) and the Southern Utah Safaris ([LINK](#)).

I have fielded a number of questions lately about adding contrast to images. So I'm going to explain what I do. I have 2 actions beyond just the usual "Contrast" control. They both function the same way - 1) Contrast Boost 15/30 2) Contrast Boost 20/50.

In Photoshop, go into Filter, Sharpen, then choose Unsharp Mask. Set the Amount to 15, Radius to 30, Threshold 0. Have an image open, and create a second layer (CTRL + J), then run each of the settings and see how it increases contrast. Do the same for the Contrast Boost 20/50 - though it is stronger. Flash the eyeball on and off for that new layer to see the resulting effect.

It does that by moving the Sharpening (15 or 20) away from the edges by the increased Radius setting.(30 or 50). Normally, sharpening works along edges, but by increasing the Radius beyond 1 (typical for most sharpening) it moves that contrast (sharpening) out into the image more. Try it, and create an action for these settings if you like it. Simple.

Fun stuff. I hope you find a safari that fits your photography desires. Come along.

Kind Regards,



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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.

