

PRESS RELEASE

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[High-resolution photos available upon request.]

Lewis and Clark Presentation Includes Time Lapse Aerial View of the Trail, March 15, 2009

"Discovering America's Natural History, The Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition", an illustrated talk by nature photographer, David Saxe, at Massabesic Audubon Center in Auburn, NH.

Auburn, NH – In 1804, in one of the first big science efforts undertaken by this new nation, Lewis and Clark set out to explore the Missouri and Columbia Rivers. Traversing some of the most rugged and beautiful terrain in North America, the expedition observed and recorded the natural history, surveyed the terrain, and made contact with the many Native American peoples along their route. In this presentation at Massabesic Audubon Center in Auburn, NH, (Sunday, March 15, 2009 from 2:00 – 4:00 pm) photographer David Saxe tells the expedition's story with aerial and ground based images from the present day Lewis and Clark Trail. This presentation includes time-lapse video showing an aerial view of the expedition's entire 1804 – 1805 westbound route.

Since 2001, photographer David Saxe has crossed the country multiple times documenting the Lewis and Clark Trail both from the air and from the ground. Using a sequence of aerial pictures taken at 10-second intervals, Mr. Saxe has compiled a video that condenses the flight along the Missouri, across the Rockies and down the Columbia River into approximately 20 minutes. Interspersing segments of this video with stills, Mr. Saxe will discuss the route and the expedition's journey from St Louis, Missouri to Astoria, Oregon. In addition to the river and terrain, images sample flora, fauna, boat replicas, reconstructed winter quarters and Indian dwellings. Additional topics include how Mr. Saxe became interested in this compelling story of American history, foods eaten by the expedition, and how to plan traveling the Trail yourself.

Mr. Saxe's Lewis and Clark collection is presently featured in an exhibit at the Massabesic Audubon Center in Auburn, NH until March 25, 2009. The exhibit, consisting of over 80 framed photographs, draws from images in this presentation. In many cases, an aerial shot is matched with a ground-based image taken from the same spot. A printed guide and map allows visitors to read about each image and determine its location along the route.

Mr. Saxe comments, "The Lewis and Clark story resonates with the American experience and I think that makes it engrossing for many. The result is that my job as a storyteller is very easy; the exhibits and this talk have been enthusiastically received. I have really enjoyed learning about the Lewis and Clark story, traveling the route and taking photographs. Now, sharing my knowledge and experiences is equally rewarding."

About David Saxe and USA Aloft

David Saxe is a systems architect, pilot and photographer with a strong background in scientific programming and systems design. Working for fifteen years at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, NJ, he created software for analysis, reduction and graphical presentation of astrophysics images, including data from Hubble Space Telescope. Mr. Saxe formed USA Aloft, a New Hampshire based software and photography company whose initial project was to document the Lewis and Clark Trail. When he is not working on the Lewis and Clark project, he records nature, adding to one of his fine art portfolios.

The goal of USA Aloft's Lewis and Clark Project is to document the trail in its present day condition with images and other material for use in the classroom, by the enthusiast or for serious research. Mr. Saxe began by photographing the trail from the air in detail using twin-mounted cameras to provide stereo views of the topography. The initial hope was to fly the route several times so that each region might be seen during the approximate season of Lewis and Clark's traversal. While the data collected is not survey-grade, the position and orientation of each image is known with an error on the order of tens of meters or less. This makes the database an ideal companion to cartographic works describing the route. A reconstruction of the survey points taken by Lewis and Clark was used as a guide for much of the flight path. During the summer and fall of 2002, Mr. Saxe designed and constructed a camera system for taking aerial stereo views along a GPS assisted route. In October, during an initial attempt to collect images along the Lewis and Clark route, weather closed in and limited collection to areas of Missouri. During the summer of 2003, flights were made to collect forward-looking stereo images over almost the entire westbound route. The return flight collected side looking views over the same route. Some initial ground based photography was done along the Columbia River, from the Gorge out to Astoria, including Fort Clatsop. The winter was spent performing initial processing to build a database that describes each image's position in space and time. During the summer of 2004, a ground based photographic trip collected images from along the entire trail. Starting in late June and traveling for nearly two months, Mr. Saxe added more images. With further pictures from along the Ohio River and earlier trips to the northwest, the collection now numbers nearly 60,000 images. For further information about David Saxe and USA Aloft, visit www.usaaloft.com.

Discovering America's Natural History
The Story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition
Presentation by David Saxe, USA Aloft, LLC

Massabesic Audubon Center
26 Audubon Way, Auburn, NH 03032
Sunday, March 15, 2009 from 2:00 – 4:00 pm

The talk is free to Audubon Society of New Hampshire members and \$5 for non-members. All proceeds benefit the Massabesic Audubon Center. To reserve a program or for more information, please contact the Massabesic Audubon Center by calling (603)-668-2045 or emailing mac@nhaudubon.org.

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