

## Five Tips for Shooting Super SCA Shots

1. **Action!** SCA members bring boatloads of passion, energy and joy to their efforts. Do your best to capture SCA's unique brand of "conservation in action."

2. **Evident Identifiers.** Help the viewer instantly identify the individuals in your photos as SCA members by including a logoed hat, shirt, name plate or other signage whenever possible. And please try to record the names of the people in your photo and where it was shot so SCA can properly catalog the picture.

3. **Watch Those Hard Hats.** Their wide brims cast harsh shadows. Use a fill-flash (see Tip #4 inside), have your subjects tip their hat back, or get down low to shoot your photo.

4. **Location, Location, Location.** The distinctive peaks of the Tetons, towering saguaro cacti, recognizable trail signs and more can provide an important sense of place in your photos. Try to include these iconic or telling elements in your composition.

5. **Keep It Real.** Authenticity is a key part of SCA's brand and let's face it, you can't fake realism. When it's accurately portrayed in a photo it earns a powerful response; when it's missing or simulated, it shows. So spend some time acclimating yourself to the SCA members, project and site, and capture those images that reflect the best of SCA!

**Digital Camera Users:** Please be sure to shoot high-resolution images. Anything smaller may work on the web, but will not work for print applications like newsletters or brochures.

And when you've finished taking all of those amazing photographs, please burn them to a CD or DVD and mail them to:

Student Conservation Association  
c/o Josh Fiedler  
P.O. Box 550  
Charlestown, NH 03603

## Picture Perfect



## Ten Tips for Taking Terrific Photos



...And Five More Tips for  
Shooting Super SCA Shots!



## Picture Perfect

1. **Respect the Rule of Thirds.** Center-stage is a great place for a performer to be, but not the subject of your photos. Imagine a tick-tack-toe grid in your viewfinder. Now place your subject at on of the intersections of lines. Many auto-focus cameras focus on whatever is in the center of the viewfinder, so be careful to lock your focus by holding down halfway on the shutter button to focus, and then reframing the picture while still holding down. Finish pressing down fully to take the photo.

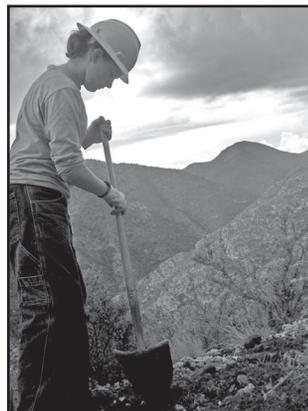


2. **Seek a Plain Background.** When you look through the camera viewfinder, force yourself to study the area surrounding your subject. Make sure no trees grow from the head of your subject and that no cars seem to dangle from the subject's ears. A neutral background will accentuate your subject and please the viewer's eyes.



3. **Get In Close.** It often pays to take a step or two closer to your subject before taking the photo, especially when shooting people. Fill the picture area with your subject(s) and you'll capture revealing details such as facial expressions while cropping extraneous distractions.

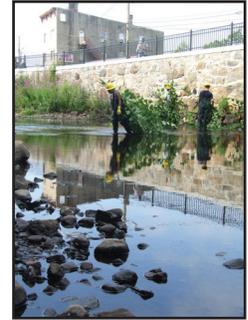
4. **Use the Right Light.** Bright sun can create unattractive shadows. Eliminate them by using your fill-flash or full-flash mode. At the same time, avoid having your subject backlit as they may appear overly dark against a bright background. Cloudy days are great for shooting pictures because shadows are less harsh and your subject won't have to squint, but use your fill-flash mode to brighten up faces and make your subjects stand out.



5. **Go Vertical.** Is your camera vertically challenged? It is if you never turn it sideways to take a vertical pictures. All sorts of things look better in a vertical picture. From a lighthouse near a cliff to the Eiffel Tower to your four-year-old jumping in a puddle. So next time out, make a conscious effort to turn your camera sideways and take some vertical photos.

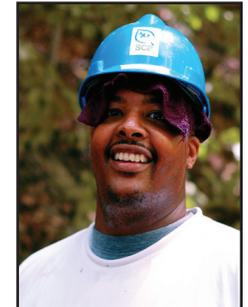
## Ten Tips for Taking Terrific Photos

6. **Play the Angles.** Select a camera angle where the natural lines of the scene lead the viewer's eyes into the picture and toward your main center of interest. You can find such a line in a road, a fence, even a shadow. Diagonal lines are dynamic; curved lines are flowing and graceful. You can often find the right line by moving around and choosing an appropriate angle.



7. **Include a Strong Point of Interest.** Just as a composer uses all the instruments in a symphony to create a stirring piece of music, you should compose each picture so that its parts work together to create a work of beauty. When taking pictures of landscapes, include an object, such as a tree or boulder, in the foreground. Give your eye a place to rest in the picture: on a clump of flowers, a cloud in the sky, a boat on a beach. Sometimes you can use the foreground elements to "frame" your subject. Overhanging tree branches, a doorway, or an arch can give a picture the depth and make it more than just a snapshot.

8. **Be On the Level.** Direct eye contact can be as engaging in a picture as it is in real life. When taking a photo of someone, hold the camera at the person's eye level to unleash the power of magnetic gazes or earnest expressions. This may require crouching. And your subject need not always stare at the camera. All by itself that eye level angle will create a more personal and inviting feeling that pulls you into the picture. Occasionally, shooting up at your subject from below eye level can result in an appealing, larger-than-life image, so be sure to experiment.



9. **Use a "Candid" Camera.** Ignore the impulse to force your subjects to always pose staring at the camera. Candid shots of people working, playing, or relaxing can best capture energy, emotion, poignancy - often the keys to powerful photography.

10. **Have fun!** Don't work your subject too hard. The goal is for him or her to relax, forget about you, and fall into a natural pose. A zoom lens can help you keep your distance. Meaningful props, like a tool, a musical instrument, or even a fish, can add interest. As for you, be creative. Project specific uses for your photos and you'll avoid bringing back generic shots. Above all: enjoy!

