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# PHOTO

# News

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**DR. WAYNE LYNCH**

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PETER BURIAN

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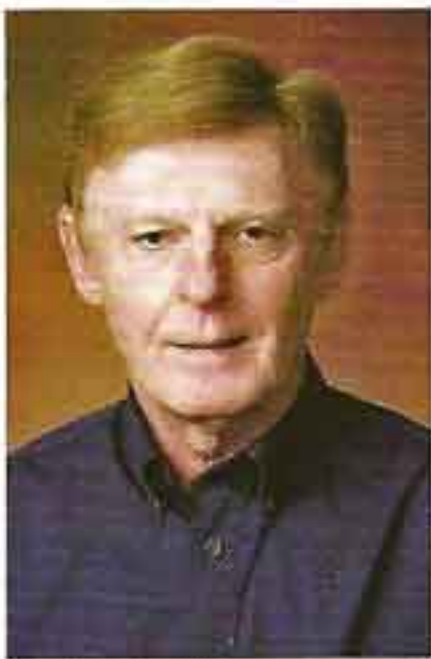
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**COMPLIMENTARY ISSUE**



# Spring Tune-Up



Text and photos  
by Peter K. Burian

*During the winter, and the long rainy weeks of March, many photo enthusiasts tend to hibernate. But with April approaching, it's time to think seriously again about outdoor photography. Just as you'll want a mechanic to prepare your car for spring, take the time to tune-up your photo equipment and to refresh your photographic skills.*

## Tune Up Your Equipment

Start by getting your SLR camera, lenses and flash ready for a good workout. Charge (or replace) any batteries. Remove the lens and clean the mirror chamber – with maximum care to avoid touching the reflex mirror – using VisibleDust Chamber Clean swabs.

Shine up your lenses with a clean, new microfibre cloth, with some Visible Lens Clean liquid to remove smears and smudges from the front elements. Use a drop of the liquid on a corner of the cloth; then dry the surface with another part of the cloth. Dedicate a second microfibre cloth for cleaning the LCD monitor. The Lens Clean product works well

on this screen and on the optical viewfinder too. For the latter, use cotton swabs to apply the liquid and dry the small piece of glass.

**Clean the Sensor:** Sooner or later, every DSLR's sensor needs cleaning to remove dust. In order to determine whether that's necessary, take a photo of a white sky or wall at f/22. Download the image and increase the contrast in imaging software (with Auto Contrast if you wish.) If specks are visible, there's dust on the sensor. Check your owner's manual for instructions on sensor cleaning. Then use a VisibleDust ZEEION anti-static blower; this product is more effective than the typical blower bulbs.

Whenever the sensor is exposed use extreme care not to touch or damage the sensitive chip. Follow the instructions in the camera owner's manual as well as those that were provided with the cleaning accessory.

Repeat the f/22 test to determine whether there's still some dust on the sensor. If there is, use an Arctic Butterfly brush for a gentle sensor cleaning. This battery-powered brush spins prior to insertion in the camera to build up an electrostatic charge. It then uses that charge to attract dust, removing it from the imaging sensor. If specks are still obvious in the next f/22 test shot, you have a stubborn speck. In that case, I recommend the



*VisibleDust ZEEION  
antistatic blower.*

VisibleDust Orange Series swabs and VDust Formula liquid.

**Hint:** Prevention is always preferable to the solution. Try to minimize the amount of dust that gets into your camera. Keep the rear cap on all lenses. Vacuum your camera bag regularly. Avoid changing lenses in dusty locations. Whenever you switch lenses, do so quickly and carefully. Minimize the amount of dust that gets into your digital SLR camera and you won't often need to worry about sensor (and chamber) cleaning.

### Refresh Your Shooting Skills

If you have not done much shooting during the winter, take an hour or two to review your owner's manual – it's a great way to become familiar with infrequently used functions. For example, you may now have the time to experiment with wireless off-camera TTL flash if your camera and your accessory flash unit supports that feature. (If not, consider buying an off-camera flash extension cord.) Also try the depth of field preview at several f/stops if that function is available. Then experiment with all of the options available in Live View.

On the weekend, plan to get outdoors to hone your shooting skills and your creative vision. Give yourself an assignment. I recommend landscape and nature photography at a major park or at a botanical gardens. Crocuses, daffodils and hyacinths are up quite early in spring; tulips and cherry or crab apple

blossoms follow about a month later. If you live in an area with woodlands, you might want to go hiking to find wildflowers such as trilliums and marsh marigolds. Or drive to a lake where

