



2015 My year in Images “ Black and White Theme

Description

Each year I pull together a collection of images that summarize all of the wildlife photography and wildlife encounters I had this past year. This year I thought I would try a theme of Black and White / Monochrome.



There are many tools that will help you process your digital images into monochromatic images; Photoshop, Lightroom, and numerous third party and plugin softwares. Even within Photoshop and Lightroom there are dozens of ways to achieve the black and white look and spirit.

For this collection of images I challenged myself to use many of the different techniques available to me in the Photoshop and Lightroom toolset.

The first challenge was which images to choose: not every image is powerful in monochrome / Black & White. Contrast, range of tonality (black to highlights), sharpness, and separation of subject and background / features are all important for making a successful monochrome image. Color can be necessary to understand the subject and the setting, but sometimes it is just a distraction. It is these times when the image can be elevated by removing the color (or most of it)

Here are the highlights of my year and a bit about how I processed the images.

January: Hammerhead Sharks in Bimini



Processed in Lightroom: In the color tools I desaturated on most of the individual color channels and Blue channels to leave a tint. I use the overall Saturation slider to remove more color. In sliders or curves. The fish eye lens has made it very dark on the edges so I compensate for the Vignette to lighten the edges and take some of the circle effect away. Finally I use Clarity and

February: Manatees (for my new book <http://www.ManateesGentleGiants.com>)

March: Tiger Sharks and Caribbean Reef Shark, Bahamas



Processed with Lightroom: Here I used one of Lightroom's Black and White Tone presets under the Split Toning adjustments and changed the colors to cool tones in silver and blue. I sharpen the subject



Processed in Photoshop: I want to use Quadtone: 4 colors assigned according to tonal range Black, shadows, whites, highlights. First change to 8 bit and Greyscale mode. Then choose Duotone Mode. I set 4 colors all in grays and browns and set the curves of each to assign them to a tonal range. I then used a Highpass filter to sharpen. Convert back to RGB before saving.



Processed in Photoshop: I used the Black & White adjustment layer first. Then I added a Color the blues and add a cool tint. I used Levels adjustment for sharpening and contrast

April – May: South Africa



I isolated the subject through cropping and further brought it out with darkened background using an adjustment brush. I did a simple desaturation with the Desaturation slider and reducing the yellows were reduced to around 15% leaving traces of yellow and red for a tinted effect



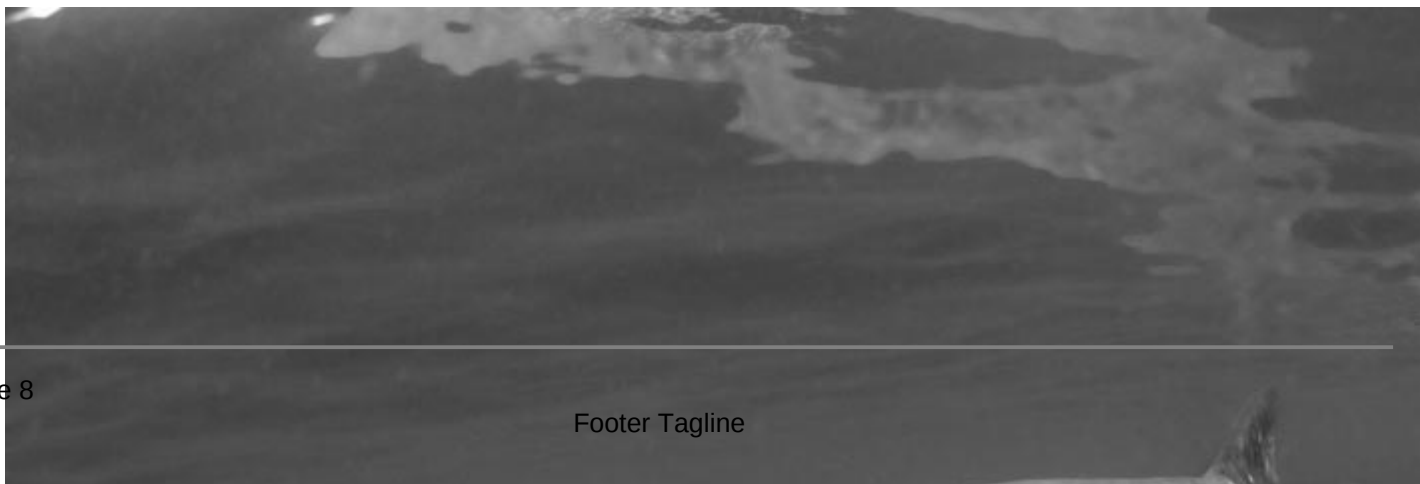
Processed in Photoshop: I used the Mode command to convert to Greyscale. Then used HDR with the Contrast preset then tweeking it to my liking. I then used dodge and burn layers to bring out details in the face. The HDR tone adjustment provided plenty of contrast and perceived sharp

June: Wild Dolphins in the Bahamas



Processed in Lightroom: This utilizes Split Toning to do the same effect as Duotones in PS. I first op desaturated the image, then set tones for the lights and darks and balanced between the two as wel

July: Whale Sharks in Mexico



Processed in Photoshop: I used the Channel Mixer to remove the color and adjust the tonality preset to make the water dark. I used a multi layer technique to add lots of sharpening: I copy of the layers then do a surface blur on it. Two different blend modes and a mask to limit the s added a Curves layer for added contrast. and some targeted dodge and burn on places like th

Sept – Oct: South Africa



Processed in Lightroom: This was misty and low contrast. I wanted to preserve this feeling. I achieved adjustment and dropped the Saturation and Vibrance sliders to subdue the already subtle colors. I used to add contrast, sharpening, and clarity to the subject. Finally I added a Post Crop Vignette to dark the rhino.

I hope this has sparked your creativity and you will start to experiment and explore ways to enhance your photos in the monochromatic realm.

Some other posts about Post Processing and Black & White

[Creative Black and White Techniques](#)

[Boosting Color with Split Toning](#)

[Correcting a Leopard Image in Lightroom](#)

Category

1. Year in Review Photo Stories

Tags

1. black and white underwater photography
2. Lightroom processing
3. monochrome digital processing
4. Photoshop techniques

Date Created

December 27, 2015

Author

africawildsafaris