

Crested Butte Wildflowers: High Alpine Off-Road Adventure

July 10-13, 2027

Workshop Description

This workshop is designed for photographers who want to experience Crested Butte's wildflower season in a more adventurous way, exploring the backcountry and high alpine landscapes beyond the easier roadside areas.

Using professionally driven off-road vehicles arranged by the festival, we'll access higher and more remote areas where expansive mountain views, alpine basins, wildflower meadows, lakes, and dramatic high-country terrain create a rich range of photographic opportunities. While this workshop will naturally lean more toward grand landscapes and a broader sense of exploration, we will also encourage participants to notice and photograph smaller scenes within these larger environments.

Our emphasis will be on responding to the conditions we find, working with changing mountain weather and light, and exploring the high country with a creative mindset rather than simply chasing standard scenic overlooks. This will be a field-focused workshop with plenty of time to photograph, explore, and receive personalized instruction from both David and Jennifer.

Because the schedule is more ambitious and the travel time is greater, this workshop will include an introductory session on the first day, with the remainder of the workshop focused primarily on time in the field.

What Participants Will Learn

- Approaches to photographing grand alpine landscapes during wildflower season
- How to find and create stronger compositions in expansive mountain environments
- Recognizing and photographing smaller scenes within the high country
- Working with layers, depth, scale, and visual flow in larger landscapes
- Using weather, atmosphere, and changing light creatively
- Balancing exploration with intentional photographic decision-making
- Choosing lenses and approaches for both broad vistas and intimate details
- Creative strategies for working in dynamic, fast-changing mountain conditions

Experience Level

This workshop is best suited for photographers who are comfortable with the technical basics of their camera and are ready for a more field-intensive experience. Participants should understand exposure, focusing, and basic camera operation so they can make the most of the instruction and changing conditions.

Fitness Level

Moderate

While the walking itself will generally be limited, participants should be comfortable walking up to about one mile at a time over uneven ground at high elevation. This workshop may reach elevations above 11,000 feet, where even light exertion can feel significantly more demanding. Accessing these locations also involves travel on mountain roads with exposure and steep drop-offs, so participants should be comfortable riding in off-road vehicles in these conditions and getting in and out of vehicles repeatedly throughout the day.

Workshop Schedule / Itinerary

Saturday, July 10

Meet around 2:00 PM for introductions, orientation, and an introductory session at The Depot. After an early group dinner, we'll head into the field for our first evening outing.

Sunday, July 11

Morning field session in the high country, followed by brunch and a midday break. In the afternoon, we'll head back into the field to explore additional backcountry locations. After an early dinner, we'll continue with an evening field session.

Monday, July 12

Morning field session, followed by brunch and a midday break. In the afternoon, we'll return to the high country for more exploration and photography. After an early dinner, we'll head out for a final evening field session.

Tuesday, July 13

Final morning field session, followed by brunch. The workshop will wrap up by 10:00 AM.