

# Top Bird Photography Tips from Melissa Groo

## 1. Get to Know Your Birds

Learn the songs and behaviors of the birds you are interested in photographing. You're much more likely to find them if you can identify their voices. Once you've found them, being able to predict their behaviors will help you take dynamic and compelling photographs.



All photographs © Melissa Groo

## 2. Go Where Birds are Used to People

Visit parks, beaches, and nature trails. It may seem like more remote locations would be better for bird photography, but especially when you're starting out, your best bet is to go to places where birds are used to having people around. They'll simply stick around longer.



## 3. Have the Wind and Sun at Your Back

Did you know that birds usually take off and land into the wind? Positioning yourself so the wind and sun are both coming from behind you will set you up for capturing well-lit photographs of birds from the front side.



## 4. Your Car is a Great Blind

So many of my favorite photos I've taken from the driver's seat. It may seem counterintuitive, but I find birds are much less skittish when I stay in my car.



## 5. Pay Attention to the Eye

The most powerful wildlife photos are those where we are at eye-level with the subject. Having a spark of light in the eye – a catchlight – also really helps bring a photographed bird to life.



## 6. Leave Room for “Virtual” Features

When working with birds standing in the water or partially obscured by vegetation, leave room for the “virtual” (unseen) legs or tail; this will make your photo more pleasing to the viewer.



## 7. Take the Bird’s Perspective

By considering the bird’s perspective, you’re often able to capture important, intimate, and fascinating moments that other photographers miss. This can really set your images apart and also keep you engaged in photography for a lifetime.

